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Immigrants and occupational welfare: industry restructuring and its effects on the occupational welfare of immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds

Abstract

This report contains the results of a study which aimed to examine some aspects of industry restructuring and its effects on the occupational welfare of the immigrants from non-English speaking countries (NESBs). In addressing this issue the study considered industry restructuring and occupational welfare in a broad context, and illustrated the issues involved by empirical investigation of the processes of restructuring in two service areas of the public services sector in New South Wales: the State Railways Authority (SRA) and the support services in public hospitals of the State Department of Health.

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Paper No.10

**Immigrants and Occupational Welfare:
Industry Restructuring and Its Effects on
the Occupational Welfare of Immigrants
from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds**

JAMROZIC / BOLAND / STEWART

Working Papers on Multiculturalism No.10

Immigrants and Occupational Welfare:

Industry Restructuring and Its Effects on the
Occupational Welfare of Immigrants from
Non-English Speaking Countries

Adam Jamrozik, Cathy Boland and Donald Stewart

Social Policy Research Centre
The University of New South Wales

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Adam Jamrozik, Cathy Boland, Donald Stewart.

February 1990

1. INTRODUCTION: THE CONTENT OF THE REPORT

This report contains the results of a study which aimed to examine some aspects of industry restructuring and its effects on the occupational welfare of the immigrants from non-English speaking countries (NESBs). In addressing this issue the study considered industry restructuring and occupational welfare in a broad context, and illustrated the issues involved by empirical investigation of the processes of restructuring in two service areas of the public services sector in New South Wales: the State Railways Authority (SRA) and the support services in public hospitals of the State Department of Health.

1.1 Aims of the Project

The issue of industry restructuring has been the subject of public debate for some years and it has now been incorporated into the negotiations on industrial awards, conditions of employment and pay structure. The aim of these processes which dominates the debate is greater productivity and competitiveness on the world market. Modifications to career structures also receive some attention but the overall picture and likely effects on the labour force are far from clear.

In this project, consideration was given to these broad issues of industry restructuring and on the strength of earlier work carried out by the authors four objectives were formulated for the project, as stated below:

- (1) To analyse the changes which were taking place in the structure of industry and occupations in Australia, and to identify the immigrants' position in the context of these changes;
- (2) to examine these changes in relation to the conditions of work, provisions for superannuation and other aspects of occupational welfare, stability of

- employment and security of tenure, and prospects for progression in the organisational structure;
- (3) to identify any processes and practices which led, or appeared to lead, to the disadvantage of the employed immigrants from NES countries, or had implications for future employment of such immigrants; and
 - (4) To draw implications from the analysis of the findings for social policy and industrial policy.

These aims and objectives of the project were formulated on the grounds of a substantial body of evidence which shows that immigrants from NES background continue to be overrepresented in the labour force of certain industries and in certain occupations in which provisions for occupational welfare are of a relatively low standard. For example, award coverage in service industries such as tourism and catering is inadequate, union membership is low, conditions of industrial awards are difficult to enforce, and much of employment is part-time or casual. While these conditions are experienced by all people who are employed in manual jobs in these industries, the overrepresentation of NESB immigrants in these jobs suggests certain reasons why this is so. If this is the case, people employed under these conditions may be justifiably regarded as a 'disadvantaged labour force'. Services provided by the public sector such as railways and hospitals are not commonly identified as part of the service industry, but in both areas a significant proportion of the labour force is employed in 'service occupations', such as cleaning, catering and related occupations, that is occupations in which workers of non-English speaking background tend to be found in large numbers. Because employment in the public sector is identified mainly with white-collar occupations - professionals, administrators - people employed in the support services in that sector constitute something of a 'forgotten labour force'.

1.2 Reasons for Selection of State Railways and Hospitals

State Railways and Health Services of New South Wales are both labour-intensive industries and, except for Education Services, they employ the largest number of people in the public sector of the State. The State Railways Authority employed approximately 40 000 in the mid-1980s but has been shedding labour since then in large

numbers, and the plan for further restructuring includes the recommendations of hired consultants to reduce the labour force by 40 per cent (Booz-Allen and Hamilton, 1989 a and b). Intentions were also announced for contracting-out some maintenance services, especially cleaning services, to private enterprise.

The State Department of Health employed over 65 000 in 1986, or 22 per cent of the total employment in the State public sector. It is difficult to ascertain whether this level of employment in the Health Services has been maintained as up-to-date statistics are not easily obtainable. The ABS data for August 1989 (ABS 1990, Catalogue No. 6248.0) indicate that in that month 165 900 persons were employed in the health services in New South Wales and 86 800 of them (52.3%) were employed in the public sector. From the available data it appears that approximately 15 per cent of people employed in Health Services are in the support services, or 'hotel services' as they are referred to, that is, cleaning, catering, laundry, and general buildings and grounds maintenance. The proportion of NESB workers in support services varies from one area to another, being considerably higher in the Sydney metropolitan area than in country hospitals; overall, the proportion appears to be about 15 per cent but in some hospitals it might be as high as 40 per cent or even higher (in one hospital the estimate was 90 per cent).

As will be seen later (Chapter 4), the extent and direction of restructuring of Health Services in NSW is not very clear and there appears to be some confusion on this issue. The State Coalition Government which came to power in 1988 declared its intention to engage in what might be called 'double restructuring', namely, commercialisation (privatisation) of certain activities and reduction of the size of the public sector as a whole.

State Railways and Health Services thus appeared to be two areas of employment appropriate for investigation in this project, as the extent of restructuring in them, however uncertain in some areas, suggested that the effect on the labour force in these services would be significant and the workers from NES background were likely to be detrimentally affected. Viewed in a wider context of industry restructuring the study has many features of an exploratory study from which implications may be drawn for further research as well as for policy.

1.3 Research Methods

Research work in this project concentrated on four methods of data collection:

- (1) Search, collection and study of relevant literature;
- (2) Analysis of statistics on the changes in employment patterns;
- (3) interviews in this field; and
- (4) consultations and attendance at meetings

Literature researched and studied consisted of books, journal articles, occasional papers and documents from official sources, and covered a range of issues in the labour market, including immigrant labour and industry restructuring. From local sources, a number of relevant documents were obtained which deal directly with the issues investigated in the project, such as documents dealing with the proposed restructuring of State Rail (NSW) and redeployment and/or retirement of staff; proposed action on structural efficiency implementation in public hospitals; and labour adjustments in other industries, such as textiles, clothing and footwear industries. Relevant literature was also obtained from Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and Office of the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment (ODEOPE).

To place the issues examined in the project in a broader context of changes in the structure of employment and the position of immigrants in the labour force, an extensive analysis of data from the surveys conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and from related sources was undertaken. Some relevant statistics were also obtained from State Rail and from Department of Health.

A number of interviews were conducted in the field. Most interviews were conducted with the employees of the two services who were likely to be affected by the restructuring processes (see appendices for interview schedules) but interviews were also conducted with persons in administrative positions and with people from relevant organisations. In total, 63 interviews were conducted, some of them with groups of people, as follows:

People interviewed	Total	Health	State Rail
Total interviews	63	34	24
Workers (cleaners, catering staff)	34	22	12
Officers (administrators, supervisors)	13	9	4
EEO Co-ordinators	3	1	2
ESL Co-ordinators	3	-	3
Union officials	5	2	3
Multiple interviews at TAFE, AMES, ECC and Labor Council of NSW	5	-	-

Consultations were held with teachers at AMES and a paper was presented by one of the investigators, Cathy Boland, at a seminar attended by AMES teachers on the topic, **Class, Ethnicity and Gender in the Privatisation Debate: The Case in Public Hospital Restructuring of Cleaning, Laundry and Catering Services** (Boland 1989). Cathy Boland also attended a meeting of combined health unions at the Labor Council of New South Wales to discuss this research project. Donald Stewart attended a seminar conducted by the Asian-Australian Resource Centre on **Anti-Racist Strategies in Education**, and another seminar on **Problems of Settlement of Indo-Chinese Refugees in Australia**. He also attended three seminars on issues relevant to the research project: one on **Improving Communication in Multicultural Workplaces**, organised by the Department of Industrial Relations and Employment (NSW); and two seminars on **Award Restructuring** and related issues, organised by the Australian Trade Union Training Authority (TUTA).

Consultations were also held with an advisory Panel of four persons, all of whom are experienced in industrial matters: one from the Department of Industrial Relations and Employment (NSW); one from a large hospital in Sydney; one from the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs; and one from the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Two meetings with the Panel were held at which the progress of the research project was discussed. The meetings were chaired by the OMA representative from the Sydney office.

In the analysis of data the following variables were considered to be relevant to the issues of industry restructuring and its effects on the NESB labour force:

- ◆ sector(s) of industry

- ◆ occupational structure
- ◆ stability of employment
- ◆ full-time/part-time/casual employment
- ◆ employment ('fringe') benefits: e.g. superannuation, etc.
- ◆ workers' ethnic background
- ◆ workers' qualifications and skills
- ◆ workers' sex/gender
- ◆ workers' age
- ◆ workers' employment history

Whenever appropriate, quantitative methods of data analysis were used. The nature of data collected, such as official documents and research monographs, as well as semi-structured interviews, called for a careful analysis of content and qualitative interpretation. For this reason, both quantitative and qualitative method of data analysis were used in the project, but in the examination of documents and of information obtained in interviews qualitative methods of analysis were more fruitful.

1.4 The Content of the Report

This report has 7 chapters. Following this introduction which has outlined the aims of the project and the methods used in the investigation to achieve these aims, various aspects and dimensions of industry restructuring are examined in Chapter 2. As 'restructuring' often, if not always, means a reduction in the numbers of people employed in a given industry or firm, the effects of such restructuring on the labour force receives particular attention in the chapter.

In Chapter 3 consideration is given to the position of immigrants in the labour market and to the likely effect on them of any restructuring in the industries in which the immigrants tend to be employed. The data in the chapter have come from earlier studies, from official statistics compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), and from currently available information about the availability of programs aimed to assist the people who have been retrenched in retraining and finding other employment.

Chapters 4 and 5 contain the findings derived from the study of the two industries examined in this project, that is, State Railways Authority and Health Services of New South Wales. Chapter 4 examines a range of documents which provide some insights into the policies and programs for restructuring of public services in New South Wales generally, and then in greater detail the programs of restructuring in the two industries selected for examination in this project. Chapter 5 records the results of face-to-face interviews conducted with various people employed in these two industries.

Discussion of the findings of the project and conclusions, together with some implications for policy, provide the content of Chapters 6 and 7. The findings from the study of restructuring in the two areas of public services in New South Wales are examined as examples from which implication may be drawn for other sectors of industry and, in a wider sense, for social and industrial policy.

2. DIMENSIONS OF INDUSTRY RESTRUCTURING

2.1 What Is Meant by 'Restructuring'?

The term 'industry restructuring' has now become part of everyday language but the meaning of the term varies widely. Industry restructuring may take a range of forms and different levels of significance and produce varied effects. At a minimum, it entails only minor changes in a firm's organisation or in the method of production. At a maximum, it may entail closure of industries and wide-ranging de-industrialisation. For example, in banking the introduction of automatic teller machines has meant certain organisational changes but the extent of activities has increased rather than being reduced. In contrast, in manufacturing industries there was a serious decline in employment, in the number of enterprises and factories and in the value of output from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, and in some industries such as textiles, clothing and footwear a veritable de-industrialisation had occurred during that period (Mangan 1986:50-67).

There is a wide and growing number of terms and concepts associated with industry restructuring. To mention some of these and their meaning:

- ◆ Vertical integration: streamlining the sequence of production
- ◆ Broadbanding: widening the range of skills and tasks performed by a worker
- ◆ Deregulation: lessening public control and oversight
- ◆ Decentralisation: spreading out activities and/or decision-making powers
- ◆ Centralisation: the opposite move from the former
- ◆ Diversification: extending the range of activities and/or products
- ◆ Privatisation: shifting activities/functions away from the public sector into the private sector
- ◆ Commercialisation: similar to privatisation, or the same

- ◆ Corporatisation: increasing freedom from public control of statutory bodies
- ◆ Capitalisation: increasing the capital/labour ratio; increasing capital intensity of production.

This list of terms and concepts is certainly not exhaustive, and new terms and concepts come into the management vocabulary with regular and increasing frequency. In translating these terms and concepts into actual processes and aims, on the scale of the whole labour market, industry restructuring entails any of the following:

- ◆ closing or reducing the scope of, certain industries and establishing or developing other industries
- ◆ Shifting direction from production for internal market to production for external market, or vice versa
- ◆ reducing the scope and number of public sectors utilities, services and enterprises and/or shifting them entirely or partially to the private sector
- ◆ above all, a common factor in all restructuring is the aim of increasing the productivity of the labour force and thus reducing the cost of production or service.

Restructuring within sectors of industry and in individual enterprises may entail any of the following changes or modifications:

- ◆ restructuring organisation hierarchy on a vertical and/or horizontal scale, thus reducing or increasing lines of communication, positions of responsibility, the division of labour and functional diversity or cohesion
- ◆ centralisation or decentralisation of activities and/or decision-making processes and structures
- ◆ changing the capital/labour ratio through technological innovation, increasing or decreasing capital intensity and modifying the methods of operation
- ◆ integrating or dividing activities, such as contracting out services or part of production, maintenance services,

It is indeed important to point out that industry restructuring is not confined to changes in industrial awards so as to facilitate multiskilling or broadbanding. Neither is the process confined to manufacturing industries, although much debate about restructuring

revolves around that sector because the developments in manufacturing have been lagging behind the developments in other sectors of industry and certainly behind the developments in manufacturing in other industrial and industrialising countries.

2.2 Where Does Restructuring Occur?

In one form or another industry restructuring has been occurring for some years. The long-term trend of this process since the mid-1960s has been characterised by four features. First, in relative terms, and for some years and in some sectors in absolute terms, employment in industries engaged in material production has been in decline. As shown in Table 2.1, from 1966 to 1989, total employment in Australia has grown by 60 per cent, but employment in industries engaged in material production has grown over the same period by less than 11 per cent. Employment in services such as wholesale and retail trade, transport and communication has grown at about the same rate of growth as the total employment. The real increases in employment have occurred in the 'management industries', that is, the industries involved in finance and business services, in public administration and in community services (health, education, welfare and related services). Employment in these sectors has grown at a rate nearly three times greater than the growth in total employment. The disparities in the rate of growth in employment among the various areas of activity have changed a little since 1982 but the overall trend still continues in the same direction (Table 2.2).

The second feature has been the changing proportion between the sexes in the labour force. In 1966, men accounted for 70 per cent of all employed persons; in 1989 that proportion fell to under 60 per cent. This change has been due mainly to the increasing number of married women entering the labour force. As shown in Table 2.1, the rate of growth since 1966 in the employment of married women has been 2.5 times greater than the rate of growth in the total employment. This trend has continued throughout the two decades and the differences have lessened only a little since 1982 (Table 2.2).

Increase in part-time employment rather than full-time employment has been another feature (Table 2.3). In 1966, less than 10 per cent of all employed persons were working part-time; by 1989, part-time work accounted for nearly 21 per cent of all employed

persons. There have always been great differences in the rates of part-time employment between men and women; the highest rates being among married women. In 1989, nearly one half of all employed married women (46.9%) were employed part-time, six times the rate for employed men (7.8%).

The fourth feature which is related to the three noted above, has been in the occupational structure, namely, the growth of professional, para-professional and related jobs which are filled by persons with post-school qualifications; and a corresponding decline in employment of persons without such qualifications. This trend in the occupational structure is of particular significance, as it is evident from the ABS data that the possession of educational qualifications gives a person a distinct advantage in obtaining employment, a better job, stable and full-time employment and a possibility of advancement. As shown in Table 2.4, people with post-school qualifications, especially those with degrees, have higher participation rates, lower rates of part-time work and of unemployment, and if unemployed the duration of their unemployment is shorter than that of people without post-school qualifications.

Educational qualifications has been one of the important issues of concern to immigrants from NES countries. This issue has now acquired an added significance, as industry restructuring often calls for new skills in the labour force and renders some of the existing skills redundant. This problem, as it affects the immigrants from NES countries especially, is examined in the next chapter.

2.3 Effects on the Labour Force

The four features of industry restructuring outlined above point to two opposite directions in the occupational structure of the labour market. On the one hand, industry restructuring has a potential for the enhancement of employment opportunities for some workers by providing them with employment which calls for a wide range of skills, multiskilling and broadbanding being two of the important concepts in the restructuring process. Some people also argue that an integral part of these changes will have to be a democratisation of the workplace, which will entail active participation of workers in the restructuring process and a greater autonomy over their jobs (Mathews, 1989).

On the other hand, industry restructuring means a reduction of employment in certain industries through closure of firms, technological innovation and increasing capital intensity, or through moving industries off-shore where the cost of labour is lower. The effect of these opposite movements is likely to be a greater polarisation of the labour force in terms of employment opportunities, security of employment, pay structure, opportunities for advancement and work conditions and occupational welfare. The last of this - occupational welfare - is an increasingly important aspect of employment. Such benefits as superannuation, various allowances, study leave and child care are important benefits which enhance a person's position in the society, both materially and socially. At present these benefits are distributed in a direct relationship to a person's position in the labour market, that is, the higher the position the greater the benefit (Graycar and Jamrozik 1989, Ch.6).

An interesting feature of the shifts in the occupational structure of the labour market, and one which is of significance to industry restructuring is the utilisation of human skills and knowledge, that is, of human capital. In the debates on industry restructuring the focus tends to be on the performance of manual trades in industries engaged in material production. Relatively less is said about the performance of people with higher occupational qualifications or about the places where they are employed. As can be seen in Table 2.5, over two-thirds of employed persons who hold degree qualifications are employed in what may be called the 'management industries', that is, industries whose function is to manage material and human resources. In the classification used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) included in these industries are three sectors: finance, property and business services; public administration; and community services (health, education, welfare). These three sectors now account for one-third of all employment but employ twice the proportion of employed persons with top qualifications.

In comparison, industries engaged in material production which also account for one-third of the employed labour force employ only 15 per cent of people with degrees. Yet it is on these industries that most debates about industry restructuring revolve, while most of the 'human capital' is employed elsewhere.

Another issue related to industry restructuring which seems to receive little attention as an issue in industry restructuring is employment in the public sector. Yet the public

sector is a significant employer, accounting in 1989 for 28 per cent of the employed labour force (ABS, 1989, No.6248.0). Furthermore, significant changes have taken place in public sector employment since the mid-1960s. Until the early 1980s most growth in employment had occurred in the public sector, from 24 per cent of all employment in 1966 to 33 per cent in the early 1980s. Since then, and especially since 1983, the growth of employment in the public sector has been arrested and most of the growth has been in the private sector. Because of the lack of accessible data it is difficult to say in which parts of the public sector employment has grown or declined. If the New South Wales public service is of any indication, a decrease in public sector employment appears to be taking place among the lower and the middle echelons of the labour force.

There appears to have been little attention given to the changes in public sector employment. For example, the widely known report **Australia Reconstructed** (Dept. of Trade, 1987) does not mention employment in the public sector; neither does the report **Towards a National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia** (Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs, 1988). Yet the 'dual restructuring' that has been taking place in the public sector is significant for its effects on the labour force employed in that sector, especially for the people employed in the various 'support services' which contribute an important part of public sector employment.

TABLE 2.1 CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT, AUSTRALIA, 1966-1989

Industry	1966		1989		Change 1966-1989		Ratio ⁽¹⁾
	N('000)	%	N('000)	%	N('000)	%	
All Industries	4823.9	100.0	7727.6	100.0	2903.7	60.2	0.0
Men	3365.6	69.8	4571.9	59.2	1206.3	35.8	0.59
Women	1458.2	30.2	3155.7	40.8	1697.5	116.4	1.93
Married Women	761.2	15.8	1926.9	24.9	1165.7	153.1	2.54
Material Production	2222.6	46.1	2462.4	31.9	239.8	10.8	0.18
Agriculture & related	429.6	8.9	406.2	5.3	-23.4	-5.4	-
Mining	58.0	1.2	105.4	1.4	47.4	81.7	1.36
Manufacturing	1232.5	25.5	1236.0	16.0	3.5	0.3	0.00
Electricity, gas, water	96.5	2.0	113.4	1.5	16.9	17.5	0.29
Construction	406.0	8.4	601.4	7.8	195.4	48.1	0.80
Services: Distribution	1368.9	28.4	2154.2	27.9	785.3	57.4	0.95
W'Sale & retail trade	993.5	20.6	1606.9	20.8	613.4	61.7	1.02
Transport & storage	270.0	5.6	407.5	5.3	137.5	50.9	0.85
Communications	105.4	2.2	139.8	1.8	34.4	32.6	0.54
Management industries	945.4	19.6	2556.1	33.1	1610.7	170.4	2.83
Finance, property, business serv.	294.4	6.1	875.2	11.3	580.8	197.3	3.28
Public administration	165.0	3.4	324.0	4.2	159.0	96.4	1.60
Community services	486.0	10.1	1356.9	17.6	870.9	179.2	2.98
Recreation, personal services	287.0	5.9	554.7	7.2	267.7	93.3	1.55

Source: ABS (1987) *The Labour Force, Australia: Historical Summary, 1966-1984* Cat. No. 6204.0
 ABS (1989) *The Labour Force, Australia: August 1989*, Cat. No. 6203

(1) Ratio to the total increase in the labour force (60.2%).

TABLE 2.2: EMPLOYED PERSONS, INDUSTRIES AUSTRALIA, 1982 - 1989
(N = '000)

Industry	1982		1989		Change		1982-1989 Ratio (1)
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
All employed persons	6379.3	100.0	7727.6	100.0	1348.3	21.1	0.00
Men	4024.3	63.1	4571.9	59.2	547.6	13.6	0.64
Women	2355.0	36.9	3155.7	40.8	800.7	34.0	1.61
Married women	1381.2	21.7	1926.9	24.9	545.7	39.5	1.87
Material production	2293.2	35.9	2462.4	31.9	169.2	7.4	0.35
Agriculture	410.2	6.4	406.2	5.3	-4.0	-1.0	-
Mining	91.2	1.4	105.4	1.4	14.2	15.6	0.74
Manufacturing	1196.3	18.8	1236.0	16.0	39.7	3.3	0.16
Electricity, Gas, Water 128.8	2.0	113.4	1.5	-15.4	-12.0	-	
Construction	466.7	7.3	601.4	7.8	134.7	28.9	1.37
Distribution, services	1753.3	27.5	2154.2	27.9	400.9	22.9	1.09
Wholesale & Retail Trade	1248.5	19.6	1606.9	20.8	358.4	28.7	1.36
Transport & Storage	375.2	5.9	407.5	5.3	32.3	8.6	0.41
Communication	129.6	2.0	139.8	1.8	10.2	7.9	0.37
Management, Finance	1930.4	30.3	2556.1	33.1	625.7	32.4	1.54
Finance, Property & Business services	587.0	9.2	875.2	11.3	288.2	49.1	2.33
Public Admin. & Defence	286.6	4.5	324.0	4.2	37.4	13.0	0.62
Community Services	1056.8	16.6	1356.9	17.6	300.1	28.4	1.35
Recreation, Personal & Other Services	402.5	6.3	554.7	7.2	152.2	37.8	1.79

Sources: ABS (1987) **The Labour Force, Australia; Historical Summary 1966-1984**, Cat. No. 6204.0

ABS (1989) **The Labour Force, Australia, August 1989**, Cat. No. 6293.0

(1) Ratio to the total increase in the labour force (21.1%).

**TABLE 2.3: CHANGES IN FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT,
AUSTRALIA 1966-1989
(N=000)**

Year/Type of Employment	All employed		Men		Women		Married Women	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1966								
All employed	4823.9	100.0	3365.6	100.0	1458.2	100.0	761.2	100.0
- Full-time	4348.8	90.2	3240.2	96.3	1108.6	76.0	492.9	64.8
- Part-time	475.1	9.8	125.4	3.7	349.6	24.0	268.3	35.2
1982								
All employed	6379.3	100.0	4024.3	100.0	2355.0	100.0	1381.2	100.0
- Full-time	5285.9	82.9	3782.5	94.0	1503.4	63.8	749.6	54.3
- Part-time	1093.4	17.1	241.8	6.0	851.6	36.2	631.6	45.7
1989								
All employed	7727.6	100.0	4571.9	100.0	3155.9	100.0	1926.9	100.0
- Full-time	6108.9	79.1	4217.5	92.2	1891.5	59.9	1022.4	53.1
- Part-time	1618.6	20.9	354.4	7.8	1264.2	40.1	904.5	46.9
Change 1966-1989+								
All employed	2903.7	60.2	1206.3	35.8	1697.7	116.4	1165.7	153.1
- Full-time	1760.1	40.5	977.3	30.2	782.9	70.6	529.5	107.4
- Part-time	1143.5	240.7	229.0	182.6	914.6	261.6	636.2	237.1
Change 1982-1989+								
All employed	1348.3	21.1	547.6	13.6	800.7	34.0	545.7	39.5
- Full-time	823.0	15.6	435.0	11.5	388.1	25.8	272.8	36.4
- Part-time	525.2	48.0	112.6	46.6	412.6	48.4	272.9	43.2

Source: ABS (1987) *The Labour Force, Australia: Historical Summary, 1966-1984*, Cat. No. 6204.0
 ABS (1989) *The Labour Force, Australia, August 1989*, Cat. No.6203.0.

**TABLE 2.4: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF THE EMPLOYED PERSONS
AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 1989**

Characteristics	Total labour force*	With post-school qualifications		Without post-school qualifications
		All with qualifications	With degrees	
Total labour force ('000)	8103.8	3703.3	806.4	4218.6
Participation rate (%)	64.2	76.3	84.2	58.6
Employed ('000)	7515.4	3537.2	774.1	3833.6
Unemployed ('000)	588.4	106.1	32.3	385.0
Unemployed (%)	7.3	4.5	4.0	9.1
Average duration of unemployment (weeks)	(Mean) 44.9	39.6	23.4	50.1
	(Median) 11.0	9.0	8.0	16.0
Men				
In labour force ('000)	4799.4	2323.6	524.0	2396.3
Participation rate (%)	76.7	83.8	88.6	74.9
Employed ('000)	4479.3	2241.1	506.0	2176.5
Employed part-time (%)	6.8	4.2	5.4	6.9
Unemployed ('000)	320.2	82.5	18.0	219.8
Unemployed (%)	6.7	3.5	3.4	9.2
Average duration of unemployment (weeks)	(Mean) 56.9	56.3	29.1	60.9
	(Median) 16.0	17.0	8.0	19.0
Women				
In labour force ('000)	3304.4	1379.7	282.4	1822.3
Participation rate (%)	51.9	66.3	77.2	45.6
Employed ('000)	3306.1	1296.1	268.1	1657.1
Employed part-time (%)	39.0	34.2	27.3	39.8
Unemployed ('000)	268.2	83.6	14.2	165.2
Unemployed (%)	8.1	6.1	5.0	9.1
Average duration of unemployment (weeks)	(Mean) 30.5	23.2	16.2	35.7
	(Median) 8.0	6.0	8.0	9.0

* Includes persons still at school

Source: ABS (1989) **Labour Force Status and Education Attainment, Australia, February, 1989**, Cat. No. 6235.0.

**TABLE 2.5: EMPLOYED PERSONS: INDUSTRY AND EDUCATIONAL
ATTAINMENT, AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 1989
(N='000)**

Type of Industry	All Employed Persons*	With Post-School Qualifications		Without Post-School
		All Qualified	With Degree	
All industries				
- N	7515.4	3537.2	774.1	3833.6
- %	100.0	47.1	10.3	51.0
Material production				
- N	2435.3	1091.9	119.2	1326.8
- % in group	100.0	44.8	4.9	54.5
- % of all employed	32.4	30.9	15.4	34.6
Services: distribution				
- N	2105.9	765.2	94.7	1234.4
- % in group	100.0	36.3	4.5	58.6
- % of all employed	28.0	21.6	12.2	32.2
Management industries				
- N	2449.3	1477.5	535.0	966.1
- % in group	100.0	60.3	21.8	39.4
- % of all employed	32.6	41.8	69.1	25.2
Recreation, personal services				
- N	524.9	202.4	25.3	306.4
- % in group	100.0	38.6	4.8	58.4
- % of all employed	7.0	5.7	3.3	8.0

Material production	=	agriculture and other primary; mining; manufacturing; electricity, gas, water; construction
Services: distribution	=	wholesale and retail trade; transport and storage; communication
Management industries	=	finance, property, business services; public administration and defence; community services
Recreation, personal services	=	entertainment, restaurants, hotels, personal services, domestic services, etc.

* Includes persons still at school

Source: ABS (1989) **Labour Force Status and Educational Attainment, Australia, February, 1989**, Cat. No. 6235.0

3. INDUSTRY RESTRUCTURING AND THE IMMIGRANTS

3.1 Location of Immigrants in Industries and Occupations

Labour force data from the official sources (e.g. ABS surveys) and numerous research monographs and books (e.g. Castles et al 1988a, Collins 1988, Hall 1988) indicate clearly that immigrants from NES countries are overrepresented in industries which employ high proportions of manual labour. Furthermore, in industries which employ people in a wide range of occupations and skills (such as community services, for example) workers from NES countries are overrepresented in the lower echelons of the organisational hierarchy, in manual occupations such as cleaning, gardening and maintenance work.

This situation appears to have changed little over the years. Looking at the employment scene in Victoria and using 1981 census data, Storer observed,

In summary, the data show that not only do migrants from non-English speaking countries concentrate in Melbourne's manufacturing and construction industries, but also they tend to concentrate almost exclusively as production workers/labourers within these industries. (1984:20).

Storer concluded that the employment scene in Victoria certainly gave some credibility to the segmentation notions of the dual labour market theory.

Similar observations and conclusions have been made by other researchers and analysts. Writing more recently, Castles et al note that the immigrants, especially those from Southern Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia are overwhelmingly found as manual workers in manufacturing and construction. These jobs mean low incomes and high unemployment rates. Moreover, Castles et al add,

Migrant disadvantage is even greater when account is taken of factors not visible to official figures. Poor working conditions, industrial accidents and illness, outwork, informal sector employment and hidden unemployment are

all factors which tend to affect non-English speaking migrants more than other workers. (1988a:27).

Correspondingly, NES immigrants are underrepresented in white-collar occupations, such as professionals and para-professional jobs and even as salespersons (Castles et al 1988b:13).

Evidence for the concentration of immigrants from NES countries in certain industries and in lower-grade manual occupations is certainly consistent and convincing. As may be ascertained from Table 3.1, the overrepresentation of NESB workers in manufacturing industries and construction is evident, for both men and women, and even more evident is their overrepresentation in manual occupations, both skilled and less skilled. The overrepresentation in these industries and occupations is reduced when all immigrants in the labour force are compared with the Australian-born labour force (Table 3.2).

There are two interesting aspects in this issue. First, both the proportion of NESB workers in the total employment and their concentration in certain industries and in manual occupations have changed little over the past decade, the overall proportions falling from 1979 to 1987 by one percentage point from 14.5 per cent to 13.4 per cent (ABS 1989, Cat.No. 4112.0). The second aspect is that the levels of educational qualifications of the NESB employed persons are about the same as of the employed labour force as a whole, and at the level of a tertiary degree it is even slightly higher (Table 3.3). Thus this suggests that the NESB employed persons, as a group, are employed in jobs which are on the whole below the level on the occupational scale which their educational qualifications would warrant. Considering that people with post-school qualifications, especially those with a degree, hold a clear position of advantage over those without post-school qualifications (Table 2.4), the NESB immigrants are in a disadvantaged position on that score.

3.2 Occupational Qualifications and Employment

Recognition and acceptance of educational qualifications of immigrants from NES countries has been one of the unresolved issues of the entire immigration program. Clearly, this problem is not simple and easy to solve, and some progress has been

achieved towards facilitating the process of acceptance of qualifications, more in some areas than in others. Nevertheless, after more than 40 years of experience in immigration from NES countries the progress has not been impressive. Castles et al (1988b) observe that in 1988 at least 30 000 skilled workers would have immigrated to Australia and about 65 per cent of these would have been from NES countries. On the basis of past experience, they say, about half of these people would probably not gain the recognition of their qualifications. The Department of Employment, Education and Training estimates that up to 7 000 skilled immigrants each year are unable to have their qualifications fully recognised and work in occupations for which they have been trained (1989).

Docking and Iredale (1989), quoting from Government documents point out that the level of occupational qualifications of immigrants has been rising over the recent years. In 1981-82, 19.4 per cent of all worker settlers were unskilled but by 1985-86 that proportion had fallen to 8.0 per cent. They also point out (as do Castles et al) that many of the skilled workers who settle in Australia today are likely to experience difficulties in having their occupational qualifications accepted. One of the major reasons for this problem, Docking and Iredale say, is 'the way in which the skills of overseas trained people are assessed' (1989:203). They see the problem as follows:

It is ironic that while the person who possesses specific skills stands before us seeking recognition of those skills, we insist on delving into the intangible past and attempting to link it to the vaguely perceived present, rather than assessing the skills they currently possess and then relating them to the occupational demands of the careers they seek. (1989:211).

Docking and Iredale make a distinction between the assessment of formal qualifications and the assessment of skills, and they argue in favour of the latter. Their argument appears to be something of a simplification, for while assessment of skills alone might be feasible and appropriate in some occupations, the relationship between formal qualifications and skills is important in many occupations and it cannot be disregarded.

Nevertheless, the difficulties many NESB immigrants still experience in having their formal qualifications recognised and accepted for employment is an indication of the attitudes held by Australian educational institutions and professional bodies towards educational institutions and professional bodies in NESB countries. While the problem

is most frequently encountered in the recognition of professional qualifications, it is also encountered in para-professional, technical and trade qualifications.

3.3 Areas of Vulnerability

It is evident from various research monographs and from the ABS data that the immigrants from NES countries experience some disadvantage in employment, in comparison with the total labour force. In addition to the ever-present problems of recognition and acceptance of educational/occupational qualifications and/or experience, the relevant data indicate that this disadvantage is two-fold: concentration of employment in sectors of industry in which employment has been shrinking in relative terms to the growth of employment as whole; and concentration in occupations which have also been shrinking in relative terms. The foremost example of such industries is the manufacturing sector in which close to one-third employed NESB men and one-quarter of employed NESB women are employed (Table 3.1). Manufacturing sector has been one in which employment continued to decline throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, and its growth since 1982 has been minimal (Table 2.1 and 2.2).

The vulnerability of employment in manufacturing has been compounded by the low-skilled jobs that the NESB workers have occupied in these industries and, on all accounts, continue to occupy. The data certainly suggest that this is the case for both sexes but especially for NESB women (Table 3.1). An added factor in vulnerability is the growing frequency of part-time employment, especially in low-skilled occupations for women. Recent data indicate that in labouring and related jobs part-time employment now accounts for 16.9 per cent for men and 57.5 per cent for women, compared to the average of 7.8 per cent for men and 40.1 per cent for women in the total employment (ABS 1989, 6203.0).

In times of industry restructuring people inevitably lose jobs and those with low-skilled occupations experience particular difficulties in finding new jobs which, more often than not, call for skills and experiences which the displaced worker does not have. As commented by Castles et al,

... the same groups have been particularly affected by processes of industrial restructuring. Many migrants have lost jobs in manufacturing during periods of recession, and have found it hard to get new jobs in periods of expansion. Often they have lacked the education, language proficiency and skills needed for employment in the growing non-manual sectors. (1988b:29).

It thus appears that certain processes in the labour market tend to reproduce themselves over and over again. First, the proportion of NESBs in the labour force has remained quite steady, with only minor variations for at least two decades. Second, by and large, the NESB workers have kept filling in jobs on the bottom of the occupational ladder. As this process has been occurring in industries in which the growth of employment has been minimal, often non-existent, and at times in a state of decline, this suggests an efflux of other workers to other, growing industries. The NESB immigrants have thus played a significant role in the mobility of the labour force, although at a cost of certain disadvantage to themselves.

The vulnerability of the NESB workers is certainly increased if they are employed in the industries in which the main feature of restructuring is the reduction of the labour force, especially if they are employed in low-skill or labouring jobs. This problem was identified already in the early 1980s (Kriegler and Sloan 1984). More recently, the problem became acute in the textiles, clothing and footwear (TCF) industries in which about 65 per cent of employees have been women and about 60 per cent of them have been immigrants (Melbourne College of Textiles 1989).

People employed in these industries, especially those employed in routine process work have never had any opportunity for acquiring new skills. As a result, when a reduction of the labour force occurs, these people's chances of finding new jobs are very low, and lower still if they are NESB immigrants and their knowledge of the English language is still limited. Thus industry restructuring has direct implications for the provision of retraining programs, education, re-skilling - all of these are of great importance for people from NES countries who already have difficulties in having their own skills and qualifications accepted.

The knowledge of the English language is the most crucial issue. As stated by the Minister for Education, Employment and Training, referring to NESB immigrants,

No matter what their trade or professional training, they remain functionally unskilled in Australia if they cannot speak, read or write English. Other factors that influence rates of immigrant unemployment include length of residence in Australia, level of education, non-recognition of overseas qualifications, cultural (including attitudinal) barriers, concentration in certain industries, and lack of knowledge of and access to relevant services. (Dawkins 1988:38)

3.4 Institutional Responses

The problems in the recognition and acceptance of overseas qualifications and the lack of competence in the English language are the two most frequently stated problems which account for the difficulties the NESB immigrants have in the labour market. These problems have been clearly stated in the documents such as the report of the Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs (ACMA) (1988). Whatever response from governments and educational institutions might have been to date, the broad body of informed opinion has been that the response was not adequate, not appropriate, not well organised, and so on. For example, the ACMA document states,

There are five critical areas in which Australia is not yet making effective use of its diverse population. These are the inadequate response of the education and training system; the lack of recognition and barriers to the use of overseas qualifications; the lack of retraining opportunities necessary for industry restructuring; the lack of value and the underutilisation of existing language and cultural skills; and the lack of awareness among employers, particularly in the private sector, of the economic benefits of cultural diversity. (ACMA 1988:73)

It is beyond the scope of this study to explore these issues to any great depth, especially the problems of recognition of overseas qualifications. That problem has acquired a quality of permanence and while some progress towards its alleviation has been achieved there is still a very long way to go towards its solution. However, the problem has now received due recognition by the Federal Government as is evident in the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* issued by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (1989) and in the initiatives taken by the Department of Education, Employment and Training (1989). The new National Office of Overseas

Skills Recognition (NOOSR) established in July 1989 and the National Advisory Committee on Skills Recognition (NACSR) indicate significant positive steps towards the improvement in the procedures for skills recognition, competence-based training and related programs. Appropriate bodies with similar aims have also been established by most State governments. At the time of writing of this report (January 1990) the effectiveness of these initiatives was still difficult to judge but the initiatives looked promising.

On the issue of education, training and retraining we have taken note of the programs available currently in New South Wales. Most of these are provided under the auspices of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and have been in operation for some years (Gardner 1989). In May 1989, TAFE (NSW) had established an Industry Restructuring Task Force whose assignment is to prepare a strategy for responding to the needs of industry restructuring. The Task Force communicates with TAFE teachers and related personnel, and organises seminars throughout the State. Consultations are also held with union representatives. TAFE sees itself as becoming 'a major provider of off-the-job vocational education and training' (TAFE 1989).

As far as we were able to ascertain from the available documents, the two sectors of industry which have been of main concern to TAFE are metals and engineering industries and textiles, clothing and footwear industries.

Most courses offered by TAFE for immigrants are those in the categories of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. The categories of courses which were provided in the second semester of 1989 were:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Category 1: | Job-seeking and Work Based |
| Category 2: | English for Further Study |
| Category 3: | Courses for People with Overseas Trade or Professional Qualifications (Refresher/Bridging) |
| Category 4: | Introduction to Vocational Study |
| Category 5: | English Language Support in TAFE Mainstream Courses (English Tutorials) |

These courses are held in various locations in the Sydney Metropolitan Area and in some country centres. The list for the second semester contained 46 specific courses, some

of which were available in multiple locations. The full-time courses were usually of 20 hours per week for 18 weeks, and part-time courses were usually of 4 hours per week for 18 weeks.

As will be seen later in this report (Chapter 5), some people whom we interviewed had taken advantage of the courses offered by TAFE. However, for many, time, money and other factors precluded their participation in out-of-work courses. The most frequently stated need was for courses provided on the job and preferably in working time. In that area there were many deficiencies to be overcome.

**TABLE 3.1: EMPLOYED PERSONS: INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION, AUSTRALIA,
AUGUST 1987**

Industry/Occupation	Men		Women	
	All employed	NESB	All employed	NESB
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
All employed ('000)	4262.3	600.6	2810.8	343.8
All employed (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		14.1*		12.2*
Industry				
Agriculture, related, mining	9.1	3.8	4.2	2.4
Manufacturing	19.9	31.6	10.8	23.4
Construction	10.0	12.7	2.1	2.1
Wholesale & retail trade	18.6	16.5	21.9	17.8
Transport, storage, communications	9.6	8.9	3.6	4.5
Finance, property & business services	9.6	7.2	12.8	11.6
Community services	10.6	7.8	29.5	24.4
Recreation, personal services	5.0	5.7	10.0	9.1
Others**	7.6	5.8	5.1	4.7
Occupation				
Managers & administrators	14.2	12.1	6.6	6.6
Professionals	12.4	10.9	12.1	9.5
Para-professionals	5.8	4.1	6.8	4.9
Clerks	7.2	5.0	32.2	25.2
Sales, personal services	8.6	5.8	21.9	14.6
Tradespersons	23.9	28.1	3.8	5.3
Plant, machine operators drivers	11.0	13.3	3.3	11.9
Labourers & related	16.8	20.7	13.2	21.9

* Percentage of employed in (1)

** Includes electricity, gas, water, and public administration

Source: ABS (1989) **Overseas Born Australians 1988: A Statistical Profile**,
Cat No. 4112.0

TABLE 3.2: EMPLOYED PERSONS, AUSTRALIA, AUGUST 1989
AUSTRALIAN - AND OVERSEAS BORN (N = 000)

Industry	(1) All Employed		(2) Australian-born			(3) Overseas-born		
	N	%	N	%	% of (1)	N	%	% of (1)
All employed	7727.6	100.0	5741.7	100.0	74.3	1985.9	100.0	25.7
Material production	2462.4	31.9	1727.6	30.1	70.2	735.1	37.0	29.8
Agriculture, other								
primary	406.2	5.3	361.6	6.3	89.0	44.7	2.3	11.0
Mining	105.4	1.4	82.3	1.4	78.1	23.1	1.2	21.9
Manufacturing	1236.0	16.0	763.8	13.3	61.8	472.2	23.8	38.2
Electricity, gas, water	113.4	1.5	95.7	1.7	84.3	17.8	0.9	15.7
Construction	601.4	7.8	424.2	7.4	70.5	177.3	8.9	29.5
Distribution: Services	2154.2	27.9	1650.3	28.7	76.6	503.9	25.4	23.4
Wholesale & retail								
trade	1606.9	20.8	1236.7	21.5	77.0	370.3	18.6	23.0
Transport & Storage	407.5	5.3	306.1	5.3	75.1	101.4	5.1	24.9
Communication	139.8	1.8	107.5	1.9	77.0	32.2	1.6	23.0
Management Services	2556.1	33.1	1952.9	34.0	76.4	603.2	30.4	23.6
Finance, property,								
business services	875.2	11.3	653.9	11.4	74.7	221.3	11.1	25.3
Public administration	324.0	4.2	263.3	4.6	81.3	60.7	3.1	18.7
Community services	1356.9	17.6	1035.7	18.0	76.3	321.2	16.2	23.7
Entertainment, service industry	554.7	7.2	411.0	7.2	74.1	143.7	7.2	25.9

Source: ABS (1989) **The Labour Force, Australia, August 1989**, Cat. No. 6203.0

TABLE 3.3: EMPLOYED PERSONS: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 1987

Educational attainment	All employed		Men		Women	
	All employed	NESB	All employed	NESB	All employed	NESB
All employed ('000) *	6998.2 %	966.4 %	4230.9 %	623.2 %	2767.3 %	343.2 %
With post-school qualifications	46.3	46.4	49.4	49.3	41.5	41.2
- Degree	9.8	12.0	10.8	12.8	8.3	10.5
- Trade qualifications	17.4	18.4	26.7	26.4	3.2	3.8
- Certificate or diploma	18.7	15.9	11.7	10.1	29.4	26.5
Without post-school qualifications	52.0	53.0	49.3	50.2	56.1	58.3
- attended highest level	12.7	12.6	12.2	12.2	13.4	13.3
- Did not: left school at 16+	18.2	12.9	14.1	12.1	16.9	14.3
- Did not: left school at 15 or-	23.7	26.8	22.7	25.4	25.3	29.4

* includes persons 15-20 years still at school

Source: ABS (1989) **Overseas Born Australians 1988: A Statistical Profile**, Cat. No. 4112.0

4. RESTRUCTURING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

4.1 Trends in Restructuring

Viewed in its entirety, the public sector is the largest employer in Australia. According to the ABS data (ABS 1990, Catalogue No. 6248.0), of the 6 214 300 wage and salary earners employed in the whole country in August 1989, 1 727 700 or 27.8 per cent were employed in the public sector. Of these, 1 156 100 (66.9%) were employed by State governments, 414 700 (24.0%) by the Commonwealth government and 157 100 (9.1%) by local government authorities. In New South Wales of the 2 152 300 wage and salary earners 560 700 (26.1%) were employed in the public sector: State government 367 600 (65.5%), Commonwealth government 133 300 (23.8%) and local government 59 800 (10.7%).

There have been two main trends in the process of restructuring in the public sector. The first is based on a search for cost-efficiency and is manifest by such measures as reducing the number of people employed or at least slowing down the rate of growth, organisational restructuring by amalgamation of departments or by creating new ones, by technological innovations, and by new methods of operation and new management techniques. The second trend is the shift towards privatisation of activities by shifting certain activities into the private sector, by use of contracting-out of certain services, and by employing private consultants.

Restructuring in the public sector has thus taken the form of 'dual restructuring', that is, internal re-organisation of activities and a shift of certain activities into the private sector. Both forms are justified by their protagonists on economic grounds - the principles of cost efficiency - although the evidence of achieving cost efficiencies, especially efficiency achieved by shifting activities into the private sector, has not been unequivocally conclusive.

Movements towards restructuring in the public sector have been taking place in both the Federal and the States' sphere as well as in local government. However, the

movements have not been uniform and there have been significant variations among the States in the extent of the measures adopted and in the methods used to achieve the stated aims.

In this research project we were concerned mainly with one fairly specific issue of industry restructuring, namely, with the effects of restructuring measures on the labour force employed in the restructuring industries. In particular, our concern was with the effects on the labour force from non-English speaking countries. We were not concerned with the issue of cost efficiency as this aspect of industry restructuring was clearly beyond the scope of our study. The issues of industry restructuring were examined in a broad perspective but for reasons explained earlier (Chapter 1) we decided to look at the processes of restructuring in the public sector and to examine those processes empirically in two areas of State government employment in New South Wales in which measures toward restructuring were already being implemented on a large scale or the measures were intended to take place. In both areas the proportion of employees from NES countries was high, above the average for the total labour force.

The two areas of industry restructuring examined in this report are the State Rail Authority and the State Department of Health. In particular, the focus of the study has been on those sections of the two establishments in which the majority of employees is engaged in relatively low-skilled, manual jobs such as cleaning and maintenance work. However, the restructuring which is taking place in these areas needs to be seen in the wider context of restructuring in the whole field of the labour market and especially in public utilities and services.

We need to emphasize again that the two areas examined in this research project have been selected as illustrations of industry restructuring and of the effects the restructuring produces, especially the effects experienced by the labour force. We are thus not concerned here in the two areas we have selected *per se*, and our aim is not to evaluate the effects of this restructuring in terms of economic efficiency of the two public services. It goes without saying that in the search for cost-efficiency in labour-intensive industries where an increase in production is not sought, (and, in fact, reduction of activity is sought, either explicitly or implicitly) the outcome will be a reduction of the employed labour force.

4.2 The Policies of the New South Wales Government on the Public Sector

The current Coalition (Liberal/National Party) Government of New South Wales came to power early in 1988 and restructuring of the State public service figured high on its election platform. Cost-efficiency has been the claimed criterion for this policy but privatisation or commercialisation of public services has been pursued since the elections with some characteristics of an ideological article of faith rather than on purely cost-efficiency criteria. This has occurred in many areas. The hiring of private consultants has become one of the features at a cost of many millions of dollars. In education, there has been a policy of limiting the growth of the public system and increasing support for the private system. Some other areas of the public sector (e.g. the Government Printer) have been entirely privatised and many public properties have been put on the market (the Sydney Morning Herald, 12-12-89). There are even moves to contract out the operation of some State prisons.

The NSW Government program for the restructuring of the State public service was introduced by an agreement on **Structural Efficiency Implementation for the New South Wales Public Service**, which was signed between the Labor Council of New South Wales and the NSW Public Employment Industrial Relations Authority in May 1989 (NSW Public Service, 1989). The aim of the Agreement was to establish 'the principles and framework under which the negotiations between individual departments and unions will take place'. The objectives as stated were:

- ◆ To improve the efficiency and productivity of the Public Service,
- ◆ To provide a rewarding work environment for employees through access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs.
- ◆ To establish a simplified and modern award structure.

The parties to the Agreement committed themselves to work towards achieving the stated objectives in a 'positive and co-operative manner'. Negative and cost-cutting attitudes and illusory short-term benefits were not to be applied in the implementation process. Time frames for restructuring were to be developed, and every effort was to be made to maintain the existing employment levels. There was to be consultation at all stages of implementation of the program, and the unions were to be represented on committees. Broadbanding and multiskilling were to be introduced, and non-

discrimination on the basis of EEO principles was to be maintained. Lower-paid workers were to be given particular attention on these issues so that they would not be detrimentally affected.

Subsequently, on 7 August 1989, the principles of Structural Efficiency Adjustment were included in the judgement of the Industrial Commission of New South Wales in relation to all State industrial awards.

In sum, the restructuring of the NSW Public Service was to include the following principles and methods of implementation:

- (a) Maintenance of employment levels wherever possible.
- (b) Consultation and education through seminars and monitoring processes.
- (c) Unions were to be represented on committees in representatives' paid time.
- (d) New classifications of jobs were to be non-discriminatory and were to be based on broadbanding, multiskilling and equitable relationships between classifications. Links were to be established between education and training, skill acquisition, degree of responsibility and remuneration. The EEO principles were to be applied and particular attention was to be given to the position of the lower-paid workers on that score.
- (e) An audit of employees' skills was to be undertaken as the basis for organisational, training and career development needs.
- (f) To improve efficiency and competitiveness of service new levels of skills were expected to be required and these were to be sought through the provision of education, training and retraining facilities and programs. Employees were to be strongly encouraged to participate in these programs.
- (g) Efforts were also to be made to facilitate people's movements between department and authorities. (NSW Public Service, 1989).

It is difficult to say at this stage how successfully has the intended program been implemented. The best known feature of the program which receives frequent comments in the press has been the reduction of employment in the State public service, reported in September 1989 to be around 21 000 persons. Losses of jobs have occurred in many sections of the State public service and have included teachers, social workers, health workers, clerks, as well as a wide range of manual workers. (Horin, 19-9-89)

4.3 The New South Wales Department of Health

(1) Employment Structure

The Department of Health, NSW, is one of the State's largest employers. In June 1986 the Department employed 75 600 persons, accounting for 22 per cent of the total employment of 346 700 persons in the NSW State public services (Parliament of NSW, Budget Papers 1987-1988). It is difficult to ascertain with precision the more recent data on employment in that department, as there has been considerable fluctuation in the numbers of people employed, due to policy initiatives, shortages of personnel (mainly in nursing) and the rather large 'grey' area in health services which is located partly in the public and partly in the private sector. However, there are no indications that the number of people employed in health services has diminished to any great extent over the past three or four years. As far as we were able to ascertain, there were approximately 65 000 persons employed in the public hospitals in NSW alone, and others would have been employed in community health and in related services.

Employment in health services, and especially in hospitals, falls into two distinct occupational groups: the professionals, para-professionals, administrators and clerks; and people providing the support services such as maintenance, cleaning, catering, laundry and other maintenance and support tasks. These latter services are sometimes referred to as 'hotel services' as there is considerable similarity between these services and those provided in hotels.

It is difficult to ascertain exactly the numbers and proportions of persons from NES countries who are employed in health services as these data are either not recorded or are not recorded and integrated at the State level. The best that can be ascertained is that approximately 20 to 25 per cent of all employees in hospitals are overseas-born and those born in NES countries account for 13 to 15 per cent of all employed persons. People employed in support services account for approximately 25 per cent of all employed. Assuming the total employment of 65 000 the numbers would be approximately as follows:

Total employment in NSW public hospitals	65 000
Persons born in NES countries (14%)	9 100
Persons employed in Support services (25%)	16 250
Persons from NES countries in Support services (14%)	2 275

These are, of course, only estimates based on data which did not appear to be very precise and therefore of limited reliability. However, these numbers of NESB employees in support services are likely to be understated. As will be seen below, the proportions of NESB employees in support services vary considerably from one geographic area to another and the data are, on the whole, not very reliable. Secondly, in our field study (see Chapter 5) the estimates given to us of NESB workers in support services were much higher, ranging from 40 to 60 per cent, or even higher.

(2) The Position of NESB Employees

In 1983, the EEO Unit of the Department of Health, NSW, undertook to conduct a survey of hospitals in the State with the aim to assess equal employment opportunities in these hospitals. Relevant factors examined in the survey were: sex, race and ethnicity, marital status, disability/physical impairment, and homosexuality. A number of surveys were conducted throughout the State, covering both city and country hospitals. As far as could be ascertained, the surveys were conducted by mailed or distributed questionnaires which the employees were asked to fill and return without giving their names. The surveys were conducted in 1984 and 1985.

The main report on the surveys contains data from 7 hospitals in the Sydney metropolitan area and 13 country hospitals or small groups of hospitals (Dept. of Health, 1986). It appears from the reports that although ethnicity was one of the areas examined, the main emphasis was given to the position of women and the findings on ethnicity were given relatively less attention. However, notwithstanding these limitations of the reports, the results show that NESB employees did experience some disadvantage in working conditions, in the attitudes of other employees and in the opportunities for advancement in the organisation structure.

Overall, the proportion of NESB employees was lower in country hospitals than in those located in Sydney. In some country hospitals their proportion was as low as 3.4 per cent but in Sydney hospitals the proportion was as high as 22 per cent. Furthermore, in comparison with their total employment, they were overrepresented in the support services and underrepresented in management positions. In contrast, both men and women from NES countries had a higher proportion of post-school qualifications than the Australian-born employees. In addition, the analysis of data showed that the

NESB employees were 'more likely than other employees to do further study in order to change their occupation, particularly males' (Dept. of Health 1986:74).

There was a lower turnover of staff in support services than in professional and para-professional services. The overall impression from the reports was that NESB workers constituted an important part of the labour force, especially in the hospitals located in the Sydney metropolitan area. They also tended to stay on the job longer than their Australian-born counterparts but they were not progressing as well on the organisational hierarchy. The conclusion can be drawn from the survey reports that, by and large, the NESB employees had difficulties in obtaining positions at organisational and/or occupational levels for which they were equipped by their education and/or experience. As one report commented on the findings,

Staff from Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) reported that they had less opportunity to act in more senior positions than other staff. They also commented on their limited expectations compared with other staff, for career advancement opportunities. (Dept. of Health 1986:2)

As to reports of unfair treatment, 12 per cent of the surveyed NESB employees from 20 hospitals reported that they felt they were at times unfairly treated at work because of their race or ethnicity.

(3) Restructuring in Hospital Support Services

Restructuring of employment in hospital support services in New South Wales has been taking place for some years. For example, the Hospital Employees (State) Award was changed in 1981 to allow for broadbanding of positions and classifications. Through that change a large number of classifications (30) such as Laundry Employee, Dressmaker, Cook, Porter, etc., was amalgamated into three grades of Hospital Assistant, Grade 1, 2 and 3 (Health Commission of New South Wales 1981). The Hospital Assistant Grade 3 has meant in practice a Leading Hand position.

The wages paid for these positions are rather low and well below the average weekly earnings in Australia, as shown below:

Hospital Assistants, wage rate per week, November 1989.

Hospital Assistant Grade 1	\$339.60
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Hospital Assistant Grade 2	\$348.10
Hospital Assistant Grade 3	\$354.20

These are the base rates and it would be expected that people employed in these jobs would be paid some overtime and/or penalty rates. However, many of the workers were employed on part-time basis and they were unlikely to work overtime, although they would be paid penalty rates for evening or weekend work.

In comparison, the average weekly earnings, Australia, May 1989, were:

	Persons	Men	Women
Full-time adult average			
weekly ordinary time earnings	\$501.10	\$530.40	\$440.80
Full-time average weekly			
total earnings	536.30	576.60	453.80
All employees average			
weekly total earnings	442.20	519.10	339.00
(ABS, 1989, Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, May 1989, Cat.No. 6302.0)			

The initiative towards restructuring of hospital support services through commercialisation came from the State Government early in 1989. The first public announcement was made by the Minister for Health in February and was later followed by another announcement in April. According to the Minister's statement the purpose of commercialisation was

...to improve the cost-effectiveness of related support services and to make the Health dollar go further by diverting funds into services which save lives and improve people's health such as cardiac, oncology and neo-natal intensive care services. (Minister for Health, Media Release, 3-4-89).

The union representing the employees in hospital support services (Health and Research Employees Association - HAREA) registered its concern about the proposed commercialisation, but the Minister expressed surprise because, he said, such a policy had already been implemented in a number of laundry and pathology services, in the cleaning of ambulance stations and in some nursing homes.

The Minister stated,

Lengthy consultations have occurred with the relevant unions and consultations would be ongoing. However, the Government would not allow the move to competitive tendering to be delayed indefinitely by the unions and expected that some projects would commence this year. (Media Release, 3-4-89).

The notion conveyed in the media release was that both the public and the private sector would compete for the contracts and this would show which sector could offer the highest standard of service at the lowest costs. The Area Health Services, Regional Directors and hospitals would be given the choice of contracting-out a range of services which would include catering, laundry, security, cleaning, garbage collecting and car parking.

The announcement nominated 20 projects but entailed 30 institutions: country hospitals, metropolitan area hospitals, health centres, nursing homes and other institutions. In all, the proposal for the 20 projects nominated for commercialisation entailed 16 hospitals and 14 other establishments. Of these, 22 proposals were for cleaning services and 8 for catering services.

The announcement received considerable publicity and raised fears that many people would lose their jobs. For example, one article in the press reported,

Hundreds of hospital cleaners and caterers could lose their jobs following a NSW Health Department order that all public hospitals cut 'hotel' services by at least 20 per cent. (Dewsbury, 30-6-89).

A specific agreement about the implementation of the Government's commercialisation and cost-efficiency program in hospital 'hotel' services was signed by the Department of Health (NSW), the Labor Council of NSW and the Health and Research Employees Association (HAREA) on 22 September 1989. The agreement followed broadly the lines of the agreement concerned with employment restructuring in the NSW Public Service which was signed earlier (NSW Public Service 1989). It mentioned the respective roles of hospital managers and employees, providing for the opportunity of the employees' to compete on an equitable basis for the provisions of the most effective service.

The 20 pilot projects nominated for commercialisation in 1989-90 by the Minister were to proceed along the lines of the agreement. The Department of Health had drafted standards for cleaning, catering and laundry services which were to be followed in the tendering submissions. The Area Health Services, Regions and Hospitals were to decide on the most efficient mechanisms for implementation of the program and they were also to consult with other involved parties and then monitor the implementation of the cost-effective mechanisms (NSW Dept. of Health 1989).

The Industrial Commission of New South Wales adopted on 4 October 1989 the structural efficiency principles which were specified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission on 7 August 1989 in the National Wage Case and which were first formulated in the National Wage Case in 1988. However, the NSW Commission had noted in its judgement that negotiations about the 4 per cent second-tier wage adjustment determined in the State Wage Case in March 1987 were still not completed for the members of the HAREA (Industrial Commission of NSW 1989: 17-18).

4.4 Restructuring in the State Rail Authority of New South Wales

(1) Employment Structure

The State Rail Authority of NSW is one of the largest employers of labour in the State, probably the third largest behind the Department of Education and Department of Health. The Authority has been restructuring its services and the labour force for some years and has been shedding labour at a fast rate. As shown below (Table 4.1) over the four years from 1985 to 1989, the labour force was reduced from 41 427 to 32 380, a decrease of 9 047 persons or 21.8 per cent.

As can be seen in Table 4.1, the largest percentage decrease in the labour force has occurred in the tradespersons group (38.3%, or close to three times the rate of decrease of the salaried and professional staff). The largest numerical decrease, however, has occurred in the non-trades persons group; 61.5 per cent (9047/5564) of the total decrease in the employed labour force. This group contains a great diversity of occupations,

demanding various levels of skills, ranging from such jobs as engine drivers to cleaners and 'base labouring staff'.

TABLE 4.1: EMPLOYMENT IN STATE RAIL AUTHORITY, NSW 1985-1989

Occupational Groups	1985(1)		1989(2)		Change 1985-1989	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All Employees	41427	100.0	32380	100.0	-9047	21.8
Salaried & professional	9819	23.7	8487	26.2	-1332	13.6
Tradespersons	7208	17.4	4448	13.7	-2760	38.3
Non-trades persons	24400	58.9	18836	58.2	-5564	22.8
Inoperative/Government Staff	NA	-	609	1.9	-	-

Source: (1) State Rail Authority of NSW, **Annual Report 1984-85**
(2) Unpublished data supplied by State Rail Authority

The vast majority of employees in State Rail are men, contributing over 90 per cent of all employed persons (90.7% in 1987 - see Table 4.2). Women are employed mainly in clerical jobs (47.8% of all employed women in 1987) and in 'service non-specialist' and in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs (42.7%) which include cleaning jobs (cleaning railway carriages, railway stations, etc.). Women's presence in other occupations is minimal.

(2) The Position of NESB Employees

In 1987, there were 4 782 employees born in NES countries employed in State Rail, accounting for 12.2 per cent of the labour force. Their numbers were probably considerably higher as the data we were able to obtain show no information on ethnicity for nearly one-third (32.90%) of employees (Table 4.3). Nevertheless, the data indicate that over 60 per cent (61.9%) of NESB workers in 1987 were employed in 'service non-specialist', and in skilled and unskilled jobs. We were not able to obtain the data on the sex of these employees but from the data shown in the previous table (Table 4.2) it may be deduced that a high proportion of these workers were women. This was also the impression we obtained in our interviews. In comparison, only 40 per

cent (40.2%) of Australian-born employees and ES immigrants were employed in these three categories of manual occupations. In all other job categories the NESB workers were underrepresented except in the professional group where they figured rather prominently (18.5% of all professional positions).

An information pamphlet issued by the EEO office of the State Rail (State Rail 1989b) notes that one in five of State Rail employees was born overseas and the ratio for female employees was one in four. There were 70 distinct ethnic groups among the State Rail employees. The pamphlet also notes that employees born in NES countries were over-represented in unskilled and semi-skilled work although 'they were more likely than Australian born employees to hold tertiary or trade qualifications'. Correspondingly, NESB employees were under-represented in management, administration and clerical positions.

The pamphlet gives information about various programs aimed to assist the NESB employees in improving their position at the State Rail. In addition to the ESL courses, the pamphlet informed about a new **Skillmax Program** which was introduced in 1989 and was aimed to assist those employees whose overseas qualifications were not recognised and/or those who were employed in the area of their expertise but were impeded in their career path by lack of English.

Another information pamphlet also issued by the EEO office (State Rail 1989a) provides details of ESL courses, inviting interested employees to apply for admission.

(3) Current and Planned Restructuring

The ongoing and planned restructuring of the State Rail is taking place on many fronts. In the country areas certain railway lines and/or certain services are being or will be discontinued. Some will be replaced by more cost-efficient services with a reduction of passenger comforts (e.g. withdrawal of sleepers and dining cars on long distance trains). Many country stations will operate without any personnel.

In the city, time-tables are being changed, rolling stock is being replaced and facilities are being renovated. Some activities are being considered for contracting-out, especially cleaning services, and trial contract cleaning in some railway depots has been

introduced, leading to industrial conflicts (Australian Industrial Relations Commission, 1989). A large repair workshop in a Sydney suburb has been nominated for closure.

All these measures involve and will continue to involve a large reduction of the labour force. In fact, a firm of consultants engaged by the State Rail to advise on restructuring and on ways to improve the efficiency of the whole system has produced a report which projects a reduction of the labour force to the extent of over 40 per cent over the next four years (Booz-Allen and Hamilton, 1989). The consultants found the entire system of the State Rail to be outdated, relying on rolling stock and other equipment which has long outlived its usefulness, and rendered inefficient by an inappropriate organisational structure, heavy overhead costs, and excessive staff levels and inefficient work practices.

Faced with the problem of reducing the labour force on such a large scale the State Rail has advised its employees that certain measures would have to be taken which would affect some people's conditions of employment or even the security of employment itself. In a brochure entitled **Reshaping Rail** the employees are advised,

Reshaping the organisation to meet our commitments and objectives will inevitably result in a reduction in staff levels throughout the organisation. Employees directly affected by these initiatives are automatically eligible for redeployment, which is only one of the many options available. (State Rail 1989 C:1).

The brochure list 6 options:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Redeployment - | placement in similar/different jobs at the same/different location |
| 2. Retraining - | providing employees with new skills/knowledge to equip them for different jobs |
| 3. Resettlement - | placement in similar jobs at different locations |
| 4. Outplacement - | paid leave to attend interviews with other employers |
| 5. Voluntary Early Retirement - | retirement before age 60 in prescribed circumstances with normal benefits |

6. Voluntary Severance - termination of employment with severance pay and other benefits

These options appear to be exercised by the management in the order of priority as listed above, that is, whenever a position is to be abolished redeployment of the incumbent to another position is considered first, but if this is not possible or practicable, or not acceptable to the incumbent, other options in the listed order are then considered. It needs to be noted that redeployment - the mildest option - does not guarantee a job at the same level of pay or in the same locality. Under the NSW Government Public Sector Redeployment Procedure there is a provision that an employee who has been redeployed to a lower-grade position retains his/her former salary for 12 months and is then changed to that of the 'new' position (State Rail 1989 c:1).

The other options project varied degrees of difficult decisions facing the employee who has to consider them and varied degrees of potential hardship. For example, the option of retraining states,

If you are redeployed to a position for which you are not qualified State Rail will train you. Training will be in State Rail time for the normal training period for the position. If you do not qualify, further training will then be available in your own time. (State Rail 1989 c:2)

There are provisions for a study leave of 5 hours per week to attend a job-related training at an external institution and free travel passes are available where applicable. An allowance of \$50 per year for book purchases is available but tuition fees and the 'graduate tax' are not reimbursed.

The option of resettlement does provide for certain allowances for travel, for moving household effects and rent in situations where the transferred employee cannot establish immediately a new residence.

Voluntary early retirement and voluntary severance options provide for certain severance pay and superannuation benefits for those employees who are members of the superannuation scheme. The scheme does not appear to be very generous and is based on the contribution of either 3 per cent or 6 per cent of employee's wages. In the examples

given in the brochure, a contributor for 10 years (as at October 1988) with a final salary of \$23 380 per annum would receive the total benefits of \$20 234 if the contribution was 3 per cent and \$40 119 after 6 per cent contribution. A person on the same level of final salary but after 20 years of contribution would receive \$49 873 and \$79 397 respectively.

An employee under 60 years of age who takes the option of voluntary severance would also receive 4 weeks' notice of termination or pay in lieu and 2 weeks' severance pay for each continuous year of service and pro-rata payment for each completed 3 months of service, up to a maximum of 26 weeks' pay (State Rail 1989 c:4-5).

It is difficult to say to what extent are all these options 'voluntary'. As will be seen in the next chapter (Chapter 5), we have found in our interviews a widespread uncertainty about the options available and about the persons most likely to be affected by the reduction and redeployment of the labour force. The problem is of particular significance for the NESB employees, many of whom are in low-grade jobs and do not all have the command of the English language to undertake successfully a retraining program for another job. Furthermore, as far as we were able to ascertain, the brochure from which we have quoted here was available only in English.

(4) Effects of Restructuring

There is very little information available on the effects of restructuring of railway industry on the redeployed retrenched/retired labour force. The only study we were able to locate was conducted by the Bureau of Transport and Communications Economics which aimed to assess the impact of restructuring in the railway industry in Australia. The Bureau conducted a survey of redeployed and retrenched railway employees in four States: State Rail Authority (NSW); V-Line (Victoria); Australian National (South Australia and Tasmania); and Westrail (Western Australia). The survey was conducted by mailed questionnaires which were sent out to 2 720 persons. Of the responses received 1 191 were considered to be useable for analysis (43.8%): 1 114 questionnaires were sent to the redeployed and redundant employees of the State Rail (NSW) and 405 useable responses (36.4%) were received. The report states the results indicate that 'the relatively uneducated were under-represented in the survey returns from SRA' (BTCE 1989:3).

The report comments that 'age, skill, length of service and educational qualifications were all found to critically influence workers' labour market experiences' (BTCE 1989:1). It was also found that redeployment as a labour management device was confined to the State Rail (SRA) where 391 persons, or 96.5 per cent of the analysed sample were redeployed while for the whole sample only 39.1 per cent persons were redeployed. In the whole sample of 1 185 persons whose outcome was identified, 463 (39.1%) were redeployed; 252 (21.3%) were employed elsewhere; 205 (17.3%) were unemployed; and 265 (22.4%) were retired (Table 4.4).

In summary, the report states that the results of the analysis indicate, inter alia:

- ◆ The probability of being redeployed was higher the lower the worker's qualifications.
- ◆ Tradespersons, labourers and clerks, in that order, were most likely to be affected.
- ◆ Occupational redeployment tended to move workers to occupations in lower skill levels.
- ◆ Close to two-thirds (64.6%) of redeployed workers did not receive any retraining.
- ◆ Of the redundant 722 workers, 34.9 per cent were employed, 28.4 per cent unemployed, and 36.7 per cent retired. The report states, however, that some of the retired persons had first experienced a period of unemployment. Only 40 of the 265 persons who retired were 65 years old. Most of the others were between 50 and 64 years old.
- ◆ The prevalent personal characteristics of those who remained unemployed were low education (form 4), aged 30-49 years, married or living in a de facto relationships but no dependent children under 18 years, owning a house, occupation of labourer and male.
- ◆ Redundancy payments varied from \$5 000 to \$100 000 but the most frequent payments were in the range of \$10 000 to \$50 000, the retired persons receiving, by and large, higher payments than the redundant workers. The modal payment for both categories was approximately \$35 000. Most frequent use of redundancy payment was to invest it or pay off the house or the car.

Among the unsolicited comments received from the respondents were comments on low morale as the effect of redeployment or retrenchment, lack of information given to

workers about what was happening, and disregard for family and community effect by the management. The negative comments were directed at the management, at the unions and at the government policy. Disregard for loyalty was another complaint, especially from those workers who had been employed with the railway industries for many years; redundancy was often seen as a personal attack on their integrity and their efficiency.

Lack of information was especially badly felt by the respondents. The report notes that in the views of the respondents,

Neither management nor unions were seen to be willing to provide information on job prospects or on available benefits or entitlements. Workers were not told what was happening, when it would happen and what the consequences would be.
(BTCE 1989:17)

Another major concern was about the effect of redeployment and redundancy on workers and their families in rural communities. Relocation meant breaking family and friendship ties and some respondents preferred to retire rather than move to another location.

The report on the survey which we were able to obtain was a 'condensed version' and it was issued in July 1989. We do not know when exactly the survey was conducted although it appears to have been fairly recent. Neither do we know what parameters were drawn for the selections of the sample. One of the significant omissions in the report is the absence of the data on ethnicity. This question was apparently not asked in the survey, although the report notes that information about interpreter services was advertised at the front page of the questionnaire in a number of languages so as to maximise the response rate from the people 'with English language problems' (BTCE 1989:3).

**TABLE 4.2: NEW SOUTH WALES STATE RAIL: WORKFORCE PROFILE,
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1987 SEX/GENDER DISTRIBUTION**

	(1) Total Workforce		(2) Men			(3) Women		
	No.	%	No.	%	% of (1)	No.	%	% of (1)
Total Workforce	39076^a	100.0	35459	100.0	90.7	3374	100.0	8.6
Managerial	472	1.2	429	1.2	90.9	43	1.3	9.1
Professional	647	1.7	613	1.7	94.7	34	1.0	5.3
Technical	1983	5.1	1899	5.4	95.8	84	2.5	4.2
Tradespersons	6246 ^b	16.0	6196	17.5	99.2	50	1.5	0.8
Clerical	4426	11.3	2814	7.9	63.6	1612	47.8	36.4
Service								
Specialist	8310	21.3	8288	23.4	99.7	22	0.7	0.3
Service								
Non-specialist	4854 ^c	12.4	4019	11.3	82.8	824	24.4	17.0
Semi-skilled	6360 ^d	16.3	6271	17.7	98.6	88	2.6	1.4
Unskilled	5778 ^e	14.8	4930	13.9	85.3	617	18.3	10.7

- Notes:**
- (a) includes 243 persons with no information on sex
 - (b) includes 1086 apprentices (1065 men and 21 women)
 - (c) includes 11 persons with no information on sex
 - (d) includes 1 person with no information on sex
 - (e) includes 231 persons with no information on sex

Source: Unpublished data supplied by State Rail of NSW.

**TABLE 4.3: NEW SOUTH WALES STATE RAIL: WORKFORCE PROFILE,
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1987 OCCUPATIONS AND ETHNIC ORIGINS**

Occupation/ Classification	(1) Total Workforce		(2) Australian born & O'seas born in ESB Countries		(3) Overseas-born in NESB			(4) No information on ethnicity		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%%	of (1)	No.	%%	of (1)
Total Workforce	39076	100.0	21438^a	100.0	4782	100.0	12.2	12856	100.0	32.9
Managerial	472	1.2	348	1.6	23	0.5	4.9	101	0.8	21.4
Professional	647	1.7	357	1.7	120	2.5	18.5	130	1.0	20.1
Technical	1983	5.1	1219	5.7	172	3.6	8.7	592	4.6	29.9
Tradespersons	5160	13.2	1899	8.9	492	10.3	9.5	2769	21.5	53.7
Apprentices	1086	2.8	920	4.3	43	0.9	4.0	123	1.0	11.3
Clerical	4426	11.3	2899	13.5	483	10.1	10.9	994	7.7	22.5
Service										
Specialist	8310	21.3	5069	23.6	487	10.2	5.9	2754	21.4	33.1
Service										
Non-Specialist	4854	12.4	2730	12.7	843	17.6	17.4	1281	10.0	26.4
Semi-skilled	6360	16.3	3262	15.2	1046	21.9	16.4	2052	16.0	32.3
Unskilled	5778	14.8	2645	12.3	1073	22.4	18.6	2060	16.0	35.7

Note: (a) 19739 Australian-born (non-Aboriginal); 471 Aborigines; and 1228 Overseas born in ESB Countries.

Source: Unpublished data supplied by State Rail of NSW.

TABLE 4.4: BTCE SURVEY OF REDEPLOYED AND REDUNDANT RAIL WORKERS

Outcome of Redeployment/ Redundancy	Total	Rail Authority			
		SRA NSW	V-Line Vic	AN National	Westrail WA
Sample responses analysed	1191	405	342	376	68
Redeployed	463	391	46	26	0
Redundant	722	13	296	346	67
• Now employed	252	9	119	93	31
• Unemployed	205	2	113	82	8
• Retired	265	2	64	171	28

Source: Bureau of Transport and Communications Economics (1989) **Survey of Redeployed and Redundant Rail Workers**

5. VIEWS ON RESTRUCTURING AND ITS EFFECTS

In this chapter we have recorded the information obtained from face-to-face interviews with various officials employed in the Department of Health and in the State Rail, with union officials, with teachers from TAFE and AMES, and with people employed as cleaners and caterers in the two State organisations.

Most data obtained in the interviews are impressionistic and there is relatively little information that could be quantified with precision. The aim of the interviews was to elicit as much of people's own views on the issues we had set out to examine as possible so that these views could then be compared with the data on the same issues extracted from various written documents (Chapter 4).

As will be seen in this chapter, the picture of the restructuring processes in the two organisations is not as clear and straight-forward as some of the documents would indicate. Furthermore, the issues involved are seen differently by the managers and administrators than by EEO co-ordinators and ESL teachers, differently again by union representatives, and certainly much differently by the workers themselves who are, or are likely to be, the most affected by the programs of restructuring.

5.1 Officials in the Department of Health

(1) Managers and Administrators

The results discussed in this section have come from interviews with nine officials in the Department of Health (NSW) holding various positions in the Department's organisation. They included people in the Head Office, Human Resources Branch, and in three large public hospitals in Sydney, Personnel Managers, Administrators and Managers responsible for support services in these hospitals. These interviews were conducted face-to-face with the assistance of a semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix 1) but the interviewed persons were invited to speak freely about the issue of restructuring so that their views could be fully elicited. The interviewees were assured

of complete confidentiality and for this reason the discussion here presents integrated findings without identifying the individual sources of information.

There was considerable apprehension in the views expressed to us about the proposals for the restructuring of hospital support services. While there was some agreement about the need for greater efficiency and views were expressed that it would be possible to achieve this, the sustained pressure for cost-cutting and contracting out of services raised anxiety and even cynicism about Government policy. There was uncertainty about the actions taken by the Government and ambivalence expressed in the attitudes towards the likely outcomes of the contracting-out proposals.

The contracting-out of services as such has been used in the past but only on a small scale in such areas as lift maintenance, heavy cleaning, cleaning of ambulance stations and similar services. The unions did not object to these practices because they were small-scale operations and the people who performed these tasks were usually union members. However the 'new' proposals for restructuring were seen by the administrators as part of the Government philosophy and attitude towards the public sector and unions, not necessarily based on concrete evidence that contracting out of services would be better or more cost-efficient. The Government had apparently looked to Britain where the Thatcher Government claimed to have achieved 17 to 20 per cent cost-savings through contracting-out of support services. (It needs to be noted that these claims have been seriously questioned (Oldfield 1983:80-91). The interviewees commented that the unions concerned did not object to consultants' examining work practices, admitting that there could be some inefficiencies in the system but were adamant that their members had to continue doing the job, and not outside-hired non-union labour. Government proposals were seen by the unions as 'thin edge of the wedge' towards the breaking of union power.

The officials themselves varied in their expectations about the likely outcomes of the contracting-out proposals. While the possibility of some cost-savings was admitted, the people who knew well what the support services in hospitals involved, especially cleaning services, were concerned about the lack of understanding of these issues at the top of State administration. As one administrator of hospital services said, 'the Department just gets these ideas. They keep sending us circulars on how to run a hospital and cluttering up my desk.'

So far, it appears that very few hospitals have proceeded actively towards contracting out support services. There was also a belief held by some officials that if contracting out proceeded the existing house teams would probably gain most contracts. Some hospitals have changed many cleaning jobs into part-time positions to improve cost-efficiency. There was a belief among the managers that a person could not work efficiently for 7 or 8 hour' shift, especially if such persons were middle-age women who until now constituted the bulk of the labour force in support services. For this reason people were employed for 3 or 4 hours a day, with 6 hours at a maximum. Preference in hiring new labour was also given to younger people, such as university students.

In hospitals where contracting-out of services had occurred, part-time work was prevalent and some staff reductions had apparently been achieved. It was difficult to determine whether any significant cost-savings had been achieved. The opinions were that hospitals operated on tight budgets and pressure on reducing costs would continue. In such situations support services tended to be the first area where cost savings were sought.

The pressure for cost-efficiency has had a direct effect on staff selection and training. In one hospital the training program for cleaners consists of a demonstration room and some help from a video tape. Training session takes three hours. Then, supervision of work is strict, exercised by the leading-hand cleaners. Check-lists are used to ensure that work is properly done. People who have difficulty in maintaining standards and schedules receive another training session. If their performance does not improve they receive a warning letter and the next step is dismissal.

Workers from NES countries constitute an important labour force in hospital support services. We were unable to obtain precise data on the numbers of NESB workers but the estimates we received from the officials varied from 50 per cent of all persons employed in support services to as high as 90 per cent in one hospital. These estimates were well above those given in the surveys conducted by the Department of Health in 1984 and 1985 referred to earlier in the previous chapter (Dept. of Health 1986).

Estimates were also made that about one-third of NESB workers had difficulties with the English language. At the time of our interviews no English classes were conducted in

the three hospitals we visited. We were told that the introduction of the English-as-a-second language (ESL) classes was not successful. People were not keen to participate and the results among those who did participate were negligible. The programs were then discontinued. Our impression was that, in general, people in management did not seem to see much need for English language classes and they justified this attitude by saying that the NESB workers were not interested in learning English. One manager said, 'they aren't really interested in English, just the money.'

(2) EEO Co-ordinator

The EEO office in the Department of Health was responsible for the implementation of Affirmative Action (AA) program concerning four groups of employees: Women, NESB Workers, Aborigines, and people with a physical disability. There were some problems in determining the extent of possible action as some hospitals (Schedule 2 and 3) were exempted from the implementation. It was not always clear who in a given hospital was a public servant and therefore within the ambit of the AA provisions and who was not. The EEO co-ordinator produced each year a management plan, specifying certain targets for implementation. There was also a Standards Manual which served as a guide for managers and administrators. There was a section in the Manual about English classes for NESB employees.

The English classes were free but people needed to be granted time off to attend. People were selected by AMES and usually only a proportion of those who applied would be selected. There was some envy among other employees who thought that English classes in work-time was something of a privilege. In 1989 a Management Skills Development program for NESB employees was introduced, designed for people employed in supervisory positions. Attendance was at no cost, subject to leave being granted to attend.

(3) Union Officials

A number of unions have members in hospital support services. The Hospital and Research Employees Association (HAREA) is the union for cleaning, catering and laundry services. In private hospitals the Australian Workers Union (AWU) is responsible for laundry services. If catering is done by contract, it is the Liquor Trade Union; for contract cleaners it is the Miscellaneous Workers Union. Some of these are State unions (e.g. HAREA); others are registered federally.

It was apparent from the information we obtained in the interviews with a member of the NSW Labor Council and with a representative of HAREA that in the proposed restructuring and privatisation of hospital services in NSW the unions have been placed in a reactive rather than active role. We were unable to obtain much information about the number of people likely to be affected by Government initiatives. There was concern expressed about possible loss of union membership, not only through employment of non-union labour by contractors but also through loss to another union, or unions.

The union representatives were aware that the trend towards contracting out of hospital support services carried the danger of loss of jobs, as well as the loss of certain conditions such as permanency of employment, full-time jobs, superannuation choices, maternity leave, and various loadings for part-time work or night-shifts. However, we found some reluctance in union representatives to discuss these issues in any detail or to discuss any plans the unions might have for counteracting Government programs which had potentially detrimental effects for the labour force.

5.2 Officials in the State Rail Authority

(1) Managers and Administrators

The four management officials in the State Rail whom we interviewed held positions of responsibility for strategic management and for personnel redeployment. As was the case with the officials in the Department of Health, these interviews were also conducted with the help of a semi-structured questionnaire but interviewees were invited to comment freely on issues which they considered to be relevant to our study.

The management officials showed considerable enthusiasm for the restructuring the SRA had undertaken. They saw the changes to be related to a desire to achieve a more efficient operation and also to become more responsive to the users of rail services. In their views there was a need for a 'new culture' among the SR employees which would enable them to develop pride in their work and in the State Rail. A new organisational structure based on decentralisation of functions and responsibilities was necessary to

achieve this 'new culture' because the other older 'discipline based' hierarchy was incapable of achieving this. The scale of changes was going to be larger than anything previously attempted by the State Rail but the result would in due course produce a 'world class' urban rail network.

Unlike the management officials who were interested mainly in achieving the efficiency intended in the restructuring, the people responsible for the redeployment of redundant employees were very much aware of the human effects of this change. The Redeployment Section was established in May 1987 and acted as a 'clearing house for surplus staff.' The section employed four people and it was expected to function for another five years. Over the past two years about 1100 persons had been redeployed. Most redundancies so far had occurred in country areas but as the restructuring proceeded more people would become redundant in the metropolitan area.

When people became redundant the first priority was to redeploy them to other jobs within the State Rail. Displaced employees received preference over others for retraining. Redeployment decisions were a mixture of meritocratic and seniority principles, and unlike in the past, meritocratic factors were in ascendance over seniority. More multiskilling would facilitate redeployment tasks but there would still be problems with job demarcation.

Outplacement was the next measure when redeployment was not possible or not practical. This entailed liaising with other public sector departments and with the private sector. Outplacement was easier for people in white-collar jobs because such jobs were available in the current labour market. The blue-collar workers, especially those who had been employed in low-skilled jobs for a long time, faced severe problems; they were difficult to retrain and difficult to shift. Some of them seemed to become aware of the uncertainty of their future and were 'just waiting for a redundancy offer'. They were not interested in any redeployment and became rather negative in their attitudes to work generally.

As to the role of the unions the opinions expressed were that the fast rate of change within State Rail had left the unions 'a little flat-footed'. Often changes were implemented before the relevant union or unions were consulted. Union power had

decreased, was the opinion; as one person said, they 'used to be a pain in the backside but now are just a nuisance.'

As far as the NESB workers were concerned, they were more difficult to redeploy because they were employed in the less-skilled jobs and it was not easy to 'skill them up'. Many of them had low education and 'a lot of them don't speak English at all well'. Hence they had difficulties in passing selection tests or in completing training courses. Furthermore, some of them were no longer young and if they were made redundant they would have great difficulty finding another job.

The people responsible for staff redeployment considered that to a certain extent this rather considerable situation was the fault of the management. The issue of language facilities had not received adequate attention; for example, there were no long-term English courses for SR employees. Not addressing these issues earlier had now exacerbated the problems of restructuring.

(2) EEO and ESL Co-ordinators

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Co-ordinators and the English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) Co-ordinators employed by the State Rail appear to work closely together and share common concerns. In the interviews we held with them (2 EEO and 3 ESL Co-ordinators) their respective views on the issues of restructuring, redeployment of labour and the effects on the NESB workers were similar but the ESL Co-ordinators tended to be more critical in their views on these issues.

Concern was expressed that given the scale of restructuring in the State Rail which would mean a reduction of the labour force in the order of close to 20 000 persons the redeployment facilities were not adequate to cope with the task. The effect was likely to mean varied degrees of unfairness and disadvantage experienced by the affected employees. The NESB workers would probably be more affected than other workers because so many of them were employed in the areas in which was going to be a high level of labour shedding.

There was no in-house training staff for ESL courses, and staff were provided by the Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES). However, AMES courses had to be booked six months in advance and this was not suitable for the fast-track reduction in the labour

force which occurred in some sections of the State Rail. Thus it was not always possible to provide the bridging courses for the staff nominated for redeployment at the time such courses were needed. Training functions at the State Rail had now been taken over by a Training Business Service, a corporatised department which contracts out its services, and the ESL courses were going to be integrated with this service.

There were problems with the way the ESL courses were constructed and in the methods of teaching. Emphasis in the courses was given to language skills with accent on colloquial usage and expression, and little attention was given to the work-related language which people needed, especially if they were to be redeployed to other jobs. For example, it would be very difficult for people with language difficulties to be redeployed from a low-skill manual job to a white-collar job.

Another factor limiting the job mobility of the NESB workers was their inability to attend ESL courses. Either a course was not provided when it was needed or people were transferred to another location mid-way through a course. All these problems were seen to be the symptoms of an unco-ordinated management in a large organisation which was going through a process of a rapid change. In that process, according to the views expressed, some previously established procedures of equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination tended to be by-passed.

One of the people interviewed who had been an ESL Co-ordinator with the State Rail for some time was particularly critical of the training practices that were prevalent in the past and which now contributed to the problem and to the disadvantages of the NESB workers in particular. Work-based language courses were introduced in about 1977 but they were narrow in orientation (e.g. 'English for crane chasers'), the language used was vernacular and the teachers were often unskilled, being recruited for their knowledge of a particular job but not for their teaching experience.

The picture presented to us on training facilities and English language courses over the past years was one of low commitment and neglect. Facilities for training were poor, training was provided out of working hours - either before or after work - often in cold railway carriages illuminated by portable lighting and in winter heated by kerosene heaters. Other areas where ESL classes were held included toilet ante-rooms. The effect of this neglect was that people who might have given 20 or 30 year of service now

found themselves possibly redundant, with a redundancy package but with little prospects of finding other employment. Any in-house qualifications that such persons might have received were of little value in the outside market place.

Concerned criticism was also expressed about the function of the EEO. The discriminatory practices of the management were also reflected in the EEO. The discriminatory aspects of past practices and of the current restructuring programs affected particularly the workers in low-skilled and labouring jobs where NESB workers were numerous but the EEO did not seem to be doing much about it. The EEO functioned mainly as a top-down interactive network for senior women employees in the State Rail. As expressed to us, 'EEO breakfasts at the Wentworth and so on'. In effect, the EEO was seen to be operating as a channel for the dissemination of management decisions rather than as a means for providing support for the people who might experience disadvantage in the large-scale change that was taking place.

(3) Union Officials

The three Union Officials we interviewed confirmed in many respects the views expressed by the other people in the State Rail. The changes that were currently taking place were unavoidable as a comprehensive restructuring of the organisation and the methods of work were necessary if the system was to continue operating. In that process various experimental pilot programs were introduced by management. In some areas, for example, contracting-out of cleaning services was introduced; in other areas where contract cleaning had been introduced earlier the job had now reverted to the SR staff.

Some work methods were still fairly 'primitive' and these methods had not changed for many years. For example, carriages were cleaned at night by torch light, the main equipment being a mop and bucket, and water had to be carried in buckets for some distance. Upgrading of such methods was going to be costly and this was one of the reasons why contract cleaning was contemplated.

The Union Officials saw the need for comprehensive restructuring of work practices and administration. As things were, responsibilities for similar functions such as cleaning or maintenance were often divided among many branches or divisions, with corresponding problems of co-ordination. There was also a need for award restructuring so that new

practices, multiskilling and broadbanding could be accommodated. The Union Officials were concerned about the loss of jobs but they saw redeployment and redundancies to be unavoidable. They estimated that approximately 30 per cent of SR employees would be NESB workers and options for many of these would be limited in the restructuring program.

5.3 Teachers and Co-ordinators in TAFE and AMES

Interviews with teachers and co-ordinators in TAFE and AMES yielded some general information about problems encountered in providing English classes to NESB immigrants. Each of the two organisations had a different function but there was some overlap as well.

TAFE courses were funded by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and the functions the organisation aimed to perform were to organise bridging courses; to organise more intensive training; and to provide refresher courses and skill-related English language courses for persons with overseas professional or trade skills. In the current programs there was more attention given to the provision of courses for people with higher skills rather than for people with low education and occupational skills. This was determined by demand as well as by more effective lobbying from the people who were able to articulate their needs better than others.

Courses provided by AMES were funded by the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (DILGEA). These courses were aimed primarily at recently arrived immigrants and were concerned with English-in-the Workplace (EWP) programs. AMES certainly played an active role in providing courses for employees in both the Department of Health and the State Rail. The demand for these courses was strong and in most places there was a waiting list.

People working in both TAFE and AMES were very much aware of the problems of adequacy of the programs they provided and of the ever-present problems of co-ordination of programs. It appears that these problems were expected to occur because of the extent and diversity of demand and the limitations of available resources.

5.4 Workers in Cleaning and Catering Services

(1) Personal Characteristics

The 34 workers in cleaning and catering services we interviewed were born in 20 different countries (Table 5.1). There were 16 men and 18 women in the sample. Of the total, 22 persons (13 men, 9 women) were employed in hospitals and 12 (3 men, and 9 women) were employed by the State Rail. Except for 5 persons who were employed in catering services as kitchen maids or cooks and one person employed as a storeman (all these in hospitals) all the others were employed as cleaners, some in supervisory positions (head cleaner, leading hand). As can be ascertained from Table 5.2, there was a wide range of age-spread in the sample as well as a wide range of time in Australia since immigration and in the length of current employment. The majority of the people interviewed were working full-time, and those who worked part-time were actually working from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours per day. Fewer than half (14) had some superannuation, and exactly one half (17) had participated in English classes or were participating at the time of our interviews.

As far as we were able to ascertain from the information given to us, 11 persons had some post-school and/or occupational qualifications which were not relevant to their current jobs and would feasibly qualify the holders for better jobs. There were two university graduates, a publisher, four office workers (3 with some accounting and bookkeeping qualifications), two motor mechanics, a sales person and a hairdresser. The others had no previous occupational qualifications, although some had work experience in industry or farming. Some of the people we interviewed had a good command of English, most were able to converse in English, but a few had only a limited knowledge of the English language.

TABLE 5.1: COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF THE INTERVIEWED NESB WORKERS

Characteristics	Total Sample N	Hospitals N	State Rail N
All persons interviewed	34	22	12
- Men	16	13	3
- Women	18	9	9
Country of Birth			
- Argentina	1	1	
- Cambodia	1	-	1
- Chile	3	3	-
- Columbia	1	1	-
- Cyprus	1	1	-
- East Timor	2	2	-
- Egypt	2	1	1
- Fiji	2	1	1
- Greece	4	-	4
- India	1	-	1
- Iran (Assyrian)	1	1	-
- Irak/Iraque	1	1	-
- Italy	1	1	-
- Malaysia (Chinese)	1	-	1
- Malta	2	1	1
- Portugal	5	4	1
- Soviet Union (Russian)	2	2	-
- Turkey	1	1	-
- Uruguay	1	1	-
- Yugoslavia	1	-	1

TABLE 5.2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERVIEWED NESB WORKERS

Characteristics	Total Sample N	Hospitals N	State Rail N
All persons interviewed	34	22	12
- Men	16	13	3
- Women	18	9	9
Age (Years)			
- 20-29	4	3	1
- 30-39	10	7	3
- 40-49	6	4	2
- 50-59	7	5	2
- 60+	1	1	-
- Not ascertained	6	2	4
Years in Australia			
- 0-4	6	4	2
- 5-9	8	5	3
- 10-19	9	9	-
- 20+	7	3	4
- Not ascertained	4	1	3
Years in current employment			
- 0-4	15	10	5
- 5-9	12	8	4
- 10-14	3	2	1
- 15+	3	1	2
- Not ascertained	1	1	-
Employed as			
- cleaners	28	16	12
- catering staff	5	5	-
- stores	1	1	-
Employed			
- Full-time	26	22	4
- Part-time	8	-	8
Superannuation			
- Yes	14	12	2
- No	13	10	3
- Not ascertained	7	-	7
Previous or current attendance at English classes			
- Yes	17	9	8
- Internal (in-house)	9	2	7
- External (TAFE, AMES)	8	7	1
- No	16	12	4
- Not ascertained	1	1	-

(2) Views on Working Conditions

For most people in the cleaning jobs we interviewed the job was a means to earn a living. Some of them held what may be called a 'philosophically realistic view' of their position: it was not the best job they had, it was hard and unpleasant at times, but it was a job. Some accepted their position with a sad resignation of knowing that this was the best they could achieve. For some, this was the first job they had in Australia and they hoped for something better in the future; for others, this was one more job, similar to others they had for many years.

Some of the cleaning jobs were hard and unpleasant, especially the cleaning of railway carriages. Most of that cleaning was done in the depot; it involved carrying buckets and mops for some distance, and getting in and out of carriages was difficult. As one woman (early 30s) said,

Work conditions are not very good, anyway. Here it is very hard because the water [to clean the carriages] is far away and we have to climb up to the trains to get there [there are no platforms at that location].

The problems experienced by cleaners in hospitals were intensified by the increased pressure to do the work faster, which came about when contracting-out of cleaning services was being considered. A comment by a male cleaner (58 years old, working in the hospital since 1981),

The leading hand he tries to force the workers to do extra work but we don't do that. They are putting on less and less staff, so we have to do all the extra work... this will never be a good hospital again. This hospital was the best in New South Wales. It is now short-staffed especially in cleaning staff.

On the positive side, people seemed to appreciate such provisions as paid leave (4 weeks per annum), provision of uniforms and free train travel passes for those working for the State Rail. As for superannuation, most of those who had it contributed only 2 to 3 per cent of their wages, even if they could have contributed more. The need for ready cash was usually the explanation for limiting the contributions. Some of those who had not taken up the superannuation option now regretted it. As commented by a woman (late 40s), 'No super, I worry about that. You have to, if I have some money it saves you... now if I leave here I have nothing...that was my mistake'.

The few people working in the catering services in the hospitals were more positive about their jobs than the cleaners, deriving some satisfaction from their work, especially if they were doing some cooking. For those who had a number of menial jobs over many years, any improvement was satisfying. An outstanding example was a long statement by a woman, now nearly 40 years old, with a history of over 20 years of various jobs:

When my family come to Australia I am 17, and go straight to work in a suit factory. My father very strict, he no let us out at night [to study]. The boss and supervisor Greek, so I no speak English at work. After another four years I went to another factory for six months, then to Wollongong for six months, but my family were in Sydney so we come back and I work in a pyjama factory for one and half years. Then my first baby was born and I was pregnant with the second soon after. I worked at home as a machinist until 2 in the morning, then up for kids...cook, work, shopping, no car, bank bills, husband late home, a builder...

Very happy here. I work very hard all my life. All the good life go... I nearly forty now. I don't want my kids to work like this. When they marry I sell the house, I want to help my kids. My kids good at school, come first easily, but no want to study, other things [attract them].

Such sober reflections were expressed often but the positive views were also there, best expressed by a man (in his 30s, one child), 'You must work hard...you come to a new country, what else can you do?'

(3) Views on Restructuring and Contracting-out of Services

The common feature in most comments we received in the interviews on the issues of restructuring and contracting-out of services was the lack of reliable information that people had about what was going on and what was being planned. This uncertainty was causing considerable anxiety among the employees in both organisations. 'There is no one to tell you what is going on', was a frequent comment. To the questions 'Is there anything happening in your job?' (Q.5, see Appendix 3) and 'How do you think these changes will affect you?' (Q.6) 'Don't know' was the usual reply.

The work of the cleaners at the State Rail was little affected by the proposed restructuring, except for the proposed 'pilot' contracting-out at one depot. However, there were pressures on the job through demands of higher standards of cleanliness than

in the past and through additions to the established routines. The information from the management about redeployment, staff reduction and redundancies was only in English and two of the cleaners we interviewed commented that they had to take the information home for their children to translate. The union (ARU) had issued some information but this was not very helpful. Said one cleaner (male, 39 years),

I read in the newsletter from ARU that there might be changes. But I'm not sure what they mean for my job. I'm not sure about this. I might be offered redundancy or unemployment... The main point is that we fear to lose our job. It is hard to find other jobs if we lose this one.

A similar degree of uncertainty was present in the views of the cleaners employed in the hospitals. People were aware of the Government policy to reduce costs and they knew that their jobs could be affected. When contracting out was first announced the union (HAREA) called a one-day strike. Some people did not know about the strike; other commented that nothing had happened and nothing had been heard about contracting-out proposals since then. That was the situation in one of the hospitals where we conducted the interviews; contracting-out had already been partially introduced in the other hospital, causing much resentment among the workers. 'The contractors have easier jobs, they don't have to cover as much floor' (male, 52 years). Another (male, 58 years) explained,

This contracting is wrong. We can do nothing about it. When they got the contractors nobody said anything back to us about changes. If I lose my job, I can't read or write English, so I couldn't move around to other jobs.

Such views and similar statements were repeated by most people we interviewed. Some heard about changes from the union and believed that the union (HAREA) would not allow the contracting-out to proceed. Others were disappointed with the union's performance: 'The unions gave us some information but nobody give exact answers' (male, mid-20s). Others expressed a greater frustration and disappointment, exemplified by the following comment (male, 58 years),

Because people have been here a long time they are not interested in protesting. It's my idea that we should have a strike for a week. The union doesn't do much to protest, nothing at all.

The same person thought that the introduction of contract cleaning in some parts of the hospital increased pressure on staff cleaners because contract cleaning was not able to cope with certain situations which often arose in the hospital. He explained,

Now, there is too much to do in your job. We don't have enough staff. In hospitals you don't need contract cleaners, you need more people to help others [cleaners]. Contract cleaners don't work properly. We have to be here all the time to clean up after accidents or problems. It takes a long time to do the floors and contract cleaners don't do a good job.

As these examples of the comments received in the interviews indicate, some people expressed disappointment and even anger at the changes introduced by the management which affected their work. They saw the introduction of contract cleaning as unfair competition which was threatening the established work methods. They also saw a potential threat to their jobs, and the lack of reliable information about planned changes exacerbated that threat. The lack of adequate information from the management about the proposed changes and their likely effects was one of the most felt problems among the workers. It was rather characteristic of this situation, as it was the situation with the cleaning services at State Rail that the most frequent answer to the question 'What is going to happen to your job?' (Q.10a) was 'Don't know'.

(4) English Classes: Access and Participation

The importance of knowing English well in speaking, reading and writing was universally recognised by the people we interviewed. The need for it was especially emphasised by the younger persons who hoped to get a better job in the future. Those who had some post-school qualifications and worked in white-collar jobs before emigrating to Australia hoped to return to similar positions after they had mastered English well.

Information about English classes at State Rail appeared to be available in pamphlets and in the employment office. To attend classes was more difficult because the selection process took a long time and there was an excess of demand. There were also some indications that the supervisory staff were not always encouraging because they wanted the worker to be on the job. Most people we interviewed thought that more classes should be provided especially now when people were faced with the uncertainty about retaining their jobs. English was thus seen as a better chance of obtaining work elsewhere if the jobs at State Rail became redundant.

Some of the older women who had been with State Rail for some years had a poor command of English and thought that it was too late to learn now. 'Very hard to learn; too old to learn', said one of them. 'No time for going to school with two kids' said another. Also, some of them indicated that in earlier years there was no encouragement or facilities for learning English and neither was there a need to learn English in order to get or keep the job of a cleaner. As one of them said (50 years, with State Rail for eight years in the 1960s and then since 1980),

When we are together at work or at home with the family we always speak our own language. When I first worked here 50 per cent of the cleaners only spoke Greek because they were Greek and that's all we needed.

A similar situation was in the hospitals. People who have lived in Australia for 10 or 20 years and have been employed in manual jobs had severe problems with the English language. The more recent immigrants who did not speak English when they arrived in Australia had attended some classes and some of them were attending classes at the time of our interviews. All of these attended classes outside their working hours and learning English in order to improve their chances of a better job was a frequently given reason. There were other reasons as well, exemplified by the following comment (woman, 40s, 9 years in Australia),

I would suggest that people [immigrants] do English full-time to get into the Australian world. You feel so stupid. It's embarrassing, it's frustrating. All the negative things happen when you can't talk English in this country, when you can't express yourself.

This person had completed a course in the hostel and two TAFE courses, one of them a medical terminology course. She did not attend any classes on the job. 'They didn't ask me. They had enough girls to go there. They pick the ones who were worse at speaking English.'

The need for more English classes was frequently expressed. People saw the need to learn English so that they could do their work better - 'we need English to talk to the patients' - and there was no opportunity to learn while working. To improve the chances of obtaining a better job was another reason, especially among those who had some educational/occupational qualifications from their country of origin - similar

reason to that also given by some of the cleaners at State Rail. Whatever the reason, English classes at work were needed. Said one man (50+ years, 7 years in Australia),

No classes, not enough classes. My training comes from my wife and kids. My tongue is full of words but I can't get them out. Kids used to help me with English before but after one hour I forget.

Thus the need for better provision of English classes at work was expressed frequently at both organisations. Those who were able to do it attended courses in their own time but many people could not afford the time and associated costs because of family obligations: 'Not much time, no money, school children, expensive rent' (woman in 30s, 2 children). For some, children acted as teachers or interpreters - an assistance frequently mentioned, especially by women.

6. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Industry Restructuring and Its Effects

Industry restructuring has become a topical issue in recent years, and hopes have been created in the public mind that it holds the key to the country's economic performance, competitiveness on the world markets and future prosperity. In common perception and understanding of the concept industry restructuring concerns mainly, if not exclusively, manufacturing industries, indicating changing methods of production, multi-skilling of the labour force, broadbanding of tasks, new career paths, and so on. All these programs are to be legalised by new industrial awards and changed relationships between employers and employees.

However, as we have noted earlier in this report (Chapter 2), industry restructuring has many dimensions although some of these have received relatively little attention because they are seen as changes which do not come into the ambit of the restructuring concept. Yet, some of these changes lead to significant economic and social outcomes. For example, the decline of manufacturing industries in the 1970s and early 1980s had led to a massive rise in unemployment, mainly among middle-aged men with family obligations but this was not regarded as 'restructuring'.

Another important area in which restructuring has been taking place is the public sector. In the debate on industry restructuring the public sector does not receive much attention, although it has been a feature of economic writings and government policies in the 1980s that the role of the public sector had to be reduced. In line with these policies the role of the public sector has indeed been reduced during the 1980s, with a corresponding decline in the rate of growth in public sector employment and in certain areas a decrease in employment numbers. Taken as a whole, the Commonwealth, the States, the local government bodies, the public sector is still the largest employer but its share of employment has been steadily falling during the 1980s.

We have noted that restructuring in the public sector entails measures which may be called a 'dual restructuring', namely, it entails programs aimed to achieve cost efficiencies, and also programs of shifting some activities to the private sector. The second of these is referred to as privatisation, commercialisation, contracting-out, and a host of other names. However, as public sector services are labour-intensive, each of these measures entails a potential or real reduction in the labour force.

Thus, in contrast to restructuring in the private sector which is used to improve the efficiency of production and through this to increase the output or at least retain the existing output, current policies on restructuring in the public sector aim to reduce the scope of the sector's activities.

Reducing the scope of public sector's activities and the corresponding reduction in the labour force poses some important questions. First, who are the people who are or are likely to be made redundant' and, second, 'who is to be responsible for them and their families if they cannot find another job and another source of income'. As a public issue, industry restructuring, especially restructuring which means a displacement of labour, may produce economic efficiencies but it entails a social cost. Who is to bear the cost, therefore, is an important issue for public interest and for government or governments, as the case might be.

In economic and social terms industry restructuring as a whole creates winners and losers. As we have shown earlier in this report (Chapters 2 and 3), over the past two decades or so there have been some important shifts in the allocation of resources in the labour market. Employment in industries engaged in material production has remained about static and in some industries it has actually declined. Most increases in employment have occurred in what may be called 'management industries' - finance, property and business services; public administration; and community services. Correspondingly, there has been a growth of jobs in professional, para-professional and related white-collar occupations. People with educational qualifications which equip them with knowledge and skills for these positions have been the winners of change.

People with skills in manual trades and those without any occupational qualifications have not fared as well as the professional and white-collar workers. If they retained employment, the industries in which they were employed were stagnating, hence any

opportunity for advancement were limited. Moreover, better jobs in these industries would be usually taken up by people with higher educational qualifications. Thus, in relative and often in absolute terms, people engaged in manual low-skilled occupations have been the losers of change.

As far as the immigrants from NES background are concerned, it is evident from the ABS data as well as from numerous studies that their relative position in the labour market has been weak. First, they have continued to be overrepresented in industries which have lagged behind in growth and development. Second, those who came to Australia with educational and occupational qualifications and corresponding knowledge and skills continued to have difficulties in having their qualifications recognised and accepted for employment. A compounding problem for many has been the lack of competence in the English language which would be a necessary prerequisite for obtaining a better job. The effect of these problems has been a low occupational mobility of many NESB workers. It is some of these people who face the threat of redundancy when industry restructuring takes place. They are the biggest potential or real losers.

6.2 Restructuring in the Public Sector

The two organisations in the NSW State public sector which we have examined in this research project provide essential services to the public and employ large numbers of people. While the restructuring processes in each appear to be rather different, there are some common features of considerable significance for the people employed in these organisations as well as for the services these organisations provide.

One common feature is an implicit, if not always clearly explicit, aim of reducing the scale of operation. In the State Rail some services in country areas as well as in the metropolitan area of Sydney have been or are being discontinued: some until now regular trains in the country, night trains in the city. Thus the claim of the management that the aim of the restructuring is to provide a better service to the public has to be accepted with some reservations. The important criterion for decisions on the provision of certain services appears to be economic viability or profitability. In the provision of

public utilities profitability and good service to the public do not always go hand in hand.

In Health Services the State Government's policy is clearly the aim to reduce the services provided by public hospitals and increase the use of private hospitals. At present public hospitals have waiting lists and private hospitals have underutilised capacity. It was interesting to note that some of the people we interviewed had thought that the policy of contracting-out support services in hospitals was a 'thin edge of the wedge' towards further privatisation of services. There have also been opinions expressed by members of the governing party and by some professionals that people who had private health insurance should not use public hospitals and thus be taking places which should be used by 'the needy'. Thus, it seems, behind the policy of restructuring there is a policy aimed at creating a dual health service system. Such a policy has been perceived by some observers to be an 'insidious form of privatisation' which means

... the maintenance of a dual public and private system of service delivery in which separate markets are defined, with the public organisation providing poorer services to the disadvantaged sector, although the private service is government funded. (Hall, 1987:64)

It needs to be noted that a 'dual health services system' has been envisaged as the policy of a future Liberal/National Party Coalition Government, should the Coalition win office at the 1990 federal election. The NSW State Government health policy thus seems to have some of the features of the proposed federal policy of the Coalition parties.

The second common feature in the restructuring of the two organisations is the application of the 'structural efficiency principles', that is, seeking to increase the cost-efficiency of the operations by organisational changes which implicitly, and in the case of State Rail explicitly, entails a reduction of the labour force. In each organisation the reduction of the labour force means the reduction of the most vulnerable labour force, in the first instance, namely, the people in low-skilled manual jobs, many of whom are women and many are NESB workers.

The stated aim of the structural efficiency principles are to 'improve the efficiency of industry and provide workers with access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs' (Industrial Commission of NSW, 1989:3). However, there are considerable limitations in applying the principles with any significant advantage for the workers in such occupations as cleaning of hospital wards or railway carriages. Career paths and career prospects in these occupations are extremely limited, and restructuring of these activities with the aim of achieving greater cost efficiency is more likely to inhibit rather than enhance the quality and improvement in working conditions or in any career advancement (Burton, 1989).

There might be some good reasons for the application of the structural efficiency principles in the State Rail, as the system has become outdated in many ways: outdated rolling stock, neglected maintenance, inefficient methods of operations. However, even there, some people we interviewed saw the program of restructuring more as a means of labour-shedding rather than a program aimed to achieve greater efficiency of operations. The statement was made by a union official because, in that official's view, labour-shedding seemed to take precedence over other changes which could improve the services.

In the program of contracting-out support services in the State hospitals application of structural efficiency principles appeared to be rather poorly substantiated, apart from a possible reduction in costs. The program had an effect of creating pressure on the existing workers to work harder so as to become more competitive in comparison with private contractors. Some workers also saw an element of unfairness in that in the hospitals where some cleaning services had already been contracted-out, people thought that the contract cleaners were not doing a good job and could not cope with emergencies or unusual situations and the staff cleaners had to do extra work to overcome the deficiencies.

The model of the contracting-out of support services in hospitals was apparently taken from Britain where the (Thatcher) Government was said to have claimed that cost savings of 17 to 20 per cent had been achieved through contracting-out of services in public hospitals. We were not able to check the validity or reliability of this information. However, in a critical assessment of the changes in the British National Health Scheme (NHS) a researcher has concluded:

Contracting out of services has not been shown to be more economical, nor more efficient, and there are relatively few major contracts for ancillary work. Private companies are likely to put in an initial tender, on which they will accept low or zero profits, so they put in a bid with which the NHS cannot compete ... However, once the contract is secure, they are likely to put up their charges - or lower the standard of service ... Even health managers now admit that the contracting out of services is more expensive than direct labour ... Outside cleaning firms are also notorious for shoddy work ... (Oldfield, 1983:89-90)

A more recent analysis of contracting out in the British public service as a whole (Ascher, 1987) indicates that the policy has had, at best, mixed results. In the NHS mandatory tendering for all auxiliary services in hospitals (cleaning, catering, laundry) was introduced in 1983 and by the end of 1985 the results varied between one hospital and another, but nowhere were cost savings of 17 or 20 per cent achieved. Overall, savings ranged from 7.6 per cent in cleaning services to as low as 2.3 per cent in catering with savings in laundry services somewhere in-between. The standard of work by contractors was 'patchy' and there was some dissatisfaction about this. It also appeared that cost savings were not necessarily the main criteria in awarding the contracts, and other factors were evidently taken into consideration. The majority of contracts in NHS were in-house contracts and most savings were also achieved by the in-house contractors (Ascher, 1987: 167-208).

These assessments suggest and support the views expressed in our interviews that cost-cutting through contracting-out of support services is possible but the quality of service is likely to deteriorate. Except for lowering the quality of service and/or exerting pressure on the workers to work harder, there does not seem to be much scope for cost-savings, considering that the workers' pay in support services is already so low (Chapter 4). In contrast, some overseas studies show that good support services have positive impact on patients and staff; they can also contribute to improved productivity and cost containment if the support staff receive recognition and good working conditions (Nacey, 1989).

6.3 Effects on the NESB Labour Force

In the ongoing and planned restructuring programs in the two organisations we examined, the pursuit of greater cost-efficiency has some economic reasons that can be rationally substantiated but also some reasons, in the case of State hospitals, which appear to be more political and ideological rather than economic. There are implications in these programs for the future of the role of the public sector in the provision of essential services to the public. We cannot enter into a debate on these issues here, except to note that policies pursued on economic grounds have certain social effects: for the society as a whole and for the people who are employed in the provision of services. An apparent cost-reduction may in fact be a 'transfer of cost' to another level of government or to the people themselves.

Our impression from this study is that notwithstanding certain rhetoric of concern for the people who were most likely to be affected by the restructuring of the two services, the effects on them had relatively little place in the scheme of things at the management level. To be sure, the State Rail had a program of redeployment of labour but it was clear that if the proposed program of restructuring were to proceed fully as recommended by the consultants, then about 40 per cent of the employees, or at least 16,000 and possibly 20 000 persons, would lose their jobs. Nowhere in the Consultants' recommendations were we able to find any comments on what should happen to the redundant labour force. We can only assume that this task was not in the Consultants' brief. The task of managing staff redeployment was being handled by a small Redeployment Unit of four persons. It was not surprising, therefore, to hear some expression of scepticism from some people who told us that there was a 'lot of difference between rhetoric and reality' at the State Rail.

In the Department of Health there did not seem to be any definite program for staff redeployment or redundancy, except the views that the State Government sought to reduce the cost of support services by 20 per cent, following the claimed success of the British model. Managers and administrators whom we interviewed expressed doubts about achieving such results but were not certain about what was going on or what was going to happen in the forthcoming months.

The most noticeable effect of the proposed restructuring measures on the NESB workers was the anxiety caused by the lack of reliable information about the restructuring programs and about who was going to be affected by them. Information available at the State Rail in pamphlets or in verbal communications from supervisors or, as was the case in Health services, in Minister's press releases, was clearly inadequate and not always trusted.

There seemed to be two reasons for this situation of uncertainty and anxiety. First, there appeared to be a lack of clear direction in the restructuring intention and a certain degree of confusion. In the case of State Rail, people knew that a large number of workers would become redundant but they did not know who that would be or when it would happen. In the case of hospitals, the proposed introduction of contract cleaning had a mark of a 'pilot' or a 'trial' scheme. Some people believed that it would not happen on a larger scale if only because 'the union would not allow it'; others became distrustful of any statement, irrespective of whether it came from the management or the union.

The other reason could be regarded as more serious and, as it were, accidental. That is, whether intentional or not, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty among employees about their future also created pressure on them to work harder and to be more compliant. For some, however, such situations became conducive towards seeking another employment or withdrawing from the labour force by taking an early retirement. Such responses would facilitate the policy of reducing the labour force by 'normal attrition'. It needs to be noted that one of the principles of the agreement on the Structural Efficiency Adjustment (see Chapter 4) was 'maintenance of employment levels wherever possible'. This objective was clearly inappropriate to the proposals for restructuring at the State Rail where a 40 per cent reduction in the labour force was planned and rather doubtful in State hospitals where a reduction of cost in support services of 20 per cent was contemplated.

For the NESB employees in both organisations the causes for anxiety were exacerbated by the difficulties of understanding clearly various comments. The people whom we interviewed, for example, had varied degrees of competence in English but many had only a limited ability to read complex information. As noted earlier (Chapter 5) some of them used their children as translators.

6.4 English Classes and Industry Restructuring

An issue which figures prominently in the discussion on industry restructuring concerns training and re-training of the labour force. Essential prerequisites for training and retraining programs include the availability of relevant programs, feasible access in terms of time, place and cost, and a person's ability to undertake an appropriate program. That ability is determined, first and foremost, by the knowledge of the relevant language, in this case English.

It is clear from the views we obtained in the interviews with the NESB workers that what people needed and what many of them wanted was more opportunities to improve their English. Such opportunities were not easily available for them. It was not easy or even possible for people to attend courses outside working hours if they had family obligations as most of them did. This was a problem particularly for women with children. Most people saw the need for English classes on-the-job and preferably in working time.

There is now a wide range of courses available at TAFE in the English for Special Purposes (ESP) Category and, undoubtedly, these courses achieve some positive results. The courses provided by AMES have a useful but limited purpose. In both programs the teachers with whom we discussed these matters were enthusiastic about their work but also aware of inadequacies, limited resources and therefore limited effects.

With the rate of change in the structure of industries and occupations which is likely to increase in the future the need for training and re-training programs will increase, thus increasing also the need for special courses for the NESB immigrants, the new arrivals as well as those who are already here but have had language difficulties. We have not examined any of the special courses now available except by reading the literature provided by TAFE and by discussing the issue with NESB workers and TAFE and AMES Teachers. It is appropriate, however, to note that the Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs (ACMA) observed in their Discussion Paper:

Special training is often sub-standard and second-rate - under-resourced, inadequately integrated into the mainstream, often lacking accreditation and ultimately ineffective. It would be far more effective to amend the core

system so that it responds properly to the needs of all
Australians. (ACMA, 1988:73)

This comment suggests that whatever changes and improvements might be effected in the provision of English courses for NESB population, the effectiveness of such courses is likely to be somewhat limited unless the monocultural nature of the 'core system' becomes more permeable to other cultures and acquires some features of multiculturalism. At present, the provision of courses or training programs for NESB population is one-directional, that is, the NESBs are expected to learn English so that they can function better in a society of monocultural institutions by adjusting themselves to their monocultural nature.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND POLICY

Most of the debate about industry restructuring revolves around industries in the private sector which are engaged in material production and employ a high proportion of manual labour with a wide diversity and varied levels of skills. Discussions about restructuring in the public sector are more concerned with the size of the sector and its possible reduction through improvements in efficiency and/or transfer of activities to the private sector.

An important part of industry restructuring is training and retraining of the labour force and various related principles and methods such as multiskilling and broadbanding. However, an inherent part of industry restructuring is the real or potential reduction of the labour force, and people who are most in the danger of becoming redundant are those without any specific occupational qualifications who are employed in jobs requiring a low level of skills. As data on the labour force show, prominent among such workers are immigrants of non-English speaking background.

Many of these immigrant workers are found in the public sector, employed in various maintenance jobs such as cleaning, catering, gardening or laundry services. Predominantly female, low-paid, these workers may be called invisible people in public places. They do not figure prominently in the image of public service employees although they perform very important tasks in that sector. They are non-militant, generally reasonably content in their work, with no great expectations of higher pay, career structure or fringe benefits.

In the two sections of the State public sector we have investigated - the State Rail and Public Hospitals NSW - the proposed restructuring entails a reduction of the labour force and/or new work practices which means a greater pressure on the workers to do more, often in less time. Any reduction of the labour force means that some people will find another job and others will rely on unemployment benefits for income support. However, many people employed in these jobs are married women and if they lose jobs

and cannot find new jobs the loss of income has to be carried by their families. This is one of the potentially negative outcomes of industry restructuring which is not immediately evident but serious for the people who may be affected and for their families.

We consider that our study poses a number of questions for policy and for further research. The public sector is the largest employer in Australia (see Chapter 4) and if the trend towards reducing its size continues, people employed in maintenance services will be losing jobs. As many of them do not have easily transferable occupational skills they are likely to join the ranks of the unemployed. The NESB workers are the most vulnerable among them. People employed in similar jobs in the private sector are similarly vulnerable.

As this was a study of a rather exploratory nature, we will confine our comments to four aspects of industry restructuring which are of particular relevance to NESB workers employed in the public as well as in the private sector, and which have implications for further research and policy.

First, we think that in situations where restructuring is considered thorough estimates and if possible, definite plans ought to be made of the likely effects on the labour force, with special consideration given to those employers whose occupational qualifications are low.

Second, in any program of restructuring systematic efforts ought to be made to consider all possible options for the redeployment of the affected labour force and/or for retraining into jobs which are most likely to be available in the labour market.

Third, one of the serious problems we have encountered in our study was the uncertainty among the workers created by the lack of reliable information available to them about the government or management plans. This uncertainty created tensions and fuelled rumours which added to the problem. There appears to be much scope for improvement in that area.

Finally, the issue of providing English language classes on the job, inside and outside working hours but preferably the former, still remains to be tackled. For people engaged

in relatively unskilled manual occupations the importance of knowing the English language well is perhaps not very important, provided they have security of employment and do not intend to move. However, when their jobs become uncertain the lack of English leads to a real disadvantage because a transfer to another job, especially to a job requiring some skills becomes extremely difficult. The chances of retraining are also low and it is these 'forgotten people' who are the most likely to become the main losers of industry restructuring.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Immigrants and Occupational Welfare: Effects of Restructuring in Hospital Catering, Cleaning and Laundry Services.

Hospital
Interviewee; Name Position
Interviewer:
Date:

1. How many persons are employed in these services at your hospital?

cleaning
catering
laundry

2. What proportion of this work-force is of non-English speaking background?

cleaning
catering
laundry
Total

3. What are the proportions of male to female and full-time to part-time staff?

.....
.....
.....

4. What is the permanency of the current staff? What is the average duration of
employment?

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX I

5. Are all employees in these services covered by Superannuation?

.....
.....
.....

6. Do you have any idea what the hospital's annual contribution the Superannuation of this workforce is?

.....
.....

7. What sick leave entitlements does this workforce have?

.....
.....
.....

8. Are there any other fringe benefits that this workforce has access to?

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.....

9. Are these services included in hospital accreditation procedures?

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.....
.....

10. Does this workforce require a good deal of personal contact with management?

.....
.....

APPENDIX I

11. As a number of members of this workforce are of non-English speaking background, does your hospital have any of the following?

i. Job descriptions in other languages e.g. menus YES / NO

.....
.....

ii English as a second language classes? YES / NO

.....
.....

iii Other

.....
.....
.....

12. Does a non-English speaking workforce have problems with understanding and implementing the disposal of blood products / infectious material?

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.....

13. For special cleaning, such as preparation of transplant rooms, or of areas contaminated with multi-resistant bacteria do cleaning staff require training?

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.....
.....

14. How is it envisaged that cleaning of sudden accidents/ 'dirty' theatre cases will be undertaken if there are contract cleaners?

.....
.....

APPENDIX I

15. Would proposed restructuring affect the disposal of contaminated and radioactive products?

.....

.....

.....

16. Is there a category of porter cleaner at your hospital? YES / NO

If yes, will you have to re-organise your hospital porters role e.g. for transporting people to and from theatre?

.....

.....

17. With catering, will contractors use hospital equipment/ kitchens or will they work outside the premises?

.....

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.....

.....

18. If working outside the premises, are there parking facilities for such a large scale procedure? YES / NO

19. Do you anticipate selling current hospital equipment? YES / NO

If yes, do you think there would be many buyers? YES /NO

.....

.....

.....

20. How would complaints be organised if the supervisors were located outside of the hospital?

.....

.....

APPENDIX I

21. How many contractors do you envisage will be running these services, and what will it cost to administer the contracts? Would more legal services be required?

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22. Do you think that litigation concerning, eg wet slippery floors, may change from the hospital's responsibility to the contractors?

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23. One public hospital noted in its annual report that as workers compensation was organised on a per capita basis, there was no financial incentive for the hospitals to improve their safety conditions and then seek lower insurance premiums. As some hospitals have large compensation payouts, do you think the proposed restructuring will change this situation?

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24. What if contractors cannot be found to take up these contracts?

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25. What termination payouts or notice of termination are you as an employer obliged to pay?

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APPENDIX I

26. How would phasing-in of the new restructuring be organised?

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27. What will be the significance of these changes?

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.....

28. Is there anything you would like to add?

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.....
.....

29. Any comments about this survey?

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.....
.....

Thank you

APPENDIX II

NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAYS **Industrial Restructuring, Areas of Interest**

1. There has been an ongoing decrease in the number of people employed by NSW Railways for some time. What are the reasons for this trend?
 - (a) Reduction of services
 - (b) Technological innovation
 - (c) Changed work practices
 - (d) Increased productivity
 - (e) Changed management practices
 - (f) Other reasons

2. Which employees have been most affected by this trend?
 - (a) Train drivers
 - (b) Train guards/conductors
 - (c) Mechanics, tradesmen
 - (d) Maintenance personnel
 - track maintenance
 - cleaning
 - other
 - (e) White-collar employees
 - clerks
 - station managers, assistants, etc.

3. How has the decrease in numbers been effected?
 - (a) 'Normal' attrition (non-replacement)
 - (b) Early retirements (encouraged option)
 - (c) Retrenchment
 - (d) Shifting personnel (lateral transfers)
 - (e) Other means

APPENDIX III

FOCUSED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - OCTOBER 1989

List of Possible Open-Ended Questions (Use prompts and probe where necessary)

1. What is your job?
2. Are you in full-time, part-time etc. employment? (Try to get more details e.g. are they in both, do they do extra work or overtime and so on).
3. How long have you been in this job? (Try to get more details e.g. previous work, how have they progressed in present and previous work etc.)
4. To whom are you responsible in your work (include rank of supervisor/superiors)?
5. Is there anything happening to this job? Is our job involved in new changes (in restructuring)? If so,

In what way - (i.e. contracted out, loss of job, redundancy, retraining for new position, from full-time to part-time, to casual)?;

Has there been much information from the management about these changes?
6. How do you think these changes will affect you? (probe e.g. change in job status, possible loss of work time or salary)
7. Do you receive benefits or special conditions that go with the job? (probe or suggest with e.g. Superannuation - estimated payout?/Holidays/Holiday leave loading/Sick leave - how much?/Uniforms - how many?/Free travel/Hospital, medical or dental benefits - free, cheaper or none?/ Training or Study leave/Internal training)
8. How much information is available on training courses? Have you attended any? If so, how many? If not, why not (e.g. too far away, English not good enough)
9. Are you from a Non-English speaking Background? (Country of birth (COB)?) Does this matter in your job?
10. a) What is going to happen to your job? Have they told you this will happen? (probe)
b) Do you receive any special English classes? Do you receive any other training? Do you think there are enough English language classes?

If they have attended classes ask:

- c) Do you think they are helpful?
- d) How many have you attended?

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